

## **THE DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE OF MORTIFICATION**

*Wherein is discovered the matter, manner, and means thereof, that comes by it,  
Necessary for every Christian to know and practice, that will live comfortably and die peaceably.*

-By Thomas Wolfall, Master of Arts, and Preacher of the Word of God, London

*Printed by T.C. for John Sweeting, and are to be sold at his shop in Popeshead alley, at the sign of the angel, the  
entering out of Cornehill, 1641.*

## *Dedication*

*To the Right Honorable John Earl of Bridgematter, Viscount Brackly, Baron Ellesmere, Lord President of Wales, and one of his Majesties' most honorable privy counsel, his noble patron,*

Right Honorable,

Having upon slow deliberation resolved to publish these meditations, being animated thereunto by some of my good friends, who are both able and judicious: my next resolution came more readily to present them unto your honor, not for the worth of the matter, but as willing to discharge my duty and service; for as my first to a pastoral charge was by your honors' liberal and unspotted bounty: so I here present the first fruits of my labors (of this kind) to your honor, as the testimony of my thankful mind; humbly desiring to shroud [cover] them under your honor's shadow; which albeit they come in a plain and homely [plain, unadorned] dress, not in wisdom of words to please the curious ear, but by the plain demonstration from the Holy Scripture, to work upon the honest heart, neither was it my intention in penning and publishing of this discourse to satisfy men's fantasies [vain thoughts] but their consciences: yet notwithstanding, I trust they will be the more acceptable unto your honor.

A soldier that intends to kill his enemy, does not do it with a flourish or flat blows; but by striking home, even to the fetching of blood. I hope I may be then excused if I take the same course; it is not paper pellets that will beat down strongholds, nor wooden words that will wound to the heart.

Wherefore I have endeavored to lay the ax to the root of the tree, and to discover that kind of war and weapons will be needful for the work.

## *Summary of the Argument*

To which end I shall humbly crave leave that I may give your honor in a few words the sum of the whole.

*Who is Our Enemy in this Battle?*

Here is the discovery [showing forth] of the enemy which is latent in us, as a snake in the grass, potent against us, building strongholds against us: lastly, subtle and politick, and so does beset us round, and hinders the entrance of the good motions of the Holy Ghost: the filth of sin and the Holy Ghost will not dwell together in the same habitation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Analysis of "indwelling sin," i.e., sin which remains in a believer after conversion, was a topic which Puritans often considered at length. Two Puritan heavyweights, John Owen & Edward Reynolds wrote extensive treatments on the topic of indwelling sin.

*We are in a War to Kill Sin*

The combat is set down in those words, *mortify* [kill] et cetera. For the place of this combat it is the church, when as once we become sons of God, then also do we become soldiers of Christ; and for the time of it, it is in and after regeneration, and not before [we cannot begin sanctified until after we have been born again]. Even though our lives may be long, yet our spiritual life in grace may be but short.

*The Spirit of Christ will Help Us in the Battle*

For our assistance we have the Spirit of Christ to arm us with that whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in the evil day; and *withal* [also] to put courage and animosity [against sin] into us, that we faint not like those Ephriamites that went out and carried bows, yet turned again in the day of battle.<sup>2</sup>

*The Goal: Life*

The reward is propounded and promised, you shall live: our fight is here, our crown hereafter.

*We are at War With our Own Indwelling Sin*

To conclude, therefore, that we may not be deceived, behold the enemy *discovered* [shown forth] the flesh with the deeds of it. So that we may not pleasantly dream of ease and security, behold a *sad* [difficult; pain; weary] combat: not against enemies, but homeborn seeming friends.<sup>3</sup> So that we may not fear nor faint in our minds: behold the Spirit of Grace helping our infirmities.

*We will Receive an Eternal Reward*

And lastly, that no man may think it vain to serve God; behold, the reward: We shall pass from a battle to a banquet, from a combat to a crown; we have the life of grace here, and the life of glory hereafter.

Wherefore, seeing that this kind of death is the end of so much misery, and the beginnig

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<sup>2</sup> “The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.” (Psalm 78:9, KJV).

<sup>3</sup> John Owen explains that indwelling sin has two primary elements: deceit and desire. Paul notes that indwelling sin consists of strong desires which darken the mind; indwelling sin has its own intentions and strategies (if you will); see: Romans 6:12, 20; 7:11, 17, 21; 8:13; 13:14; Gal. 5:16-17; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19, 22; et cetera.

of so great happiness, which is the main drift of this discourse; I hope that your honor's best leisure<sup>4</sup>, it may do you some service, though not to inform you of what you know not, yet to mind you of what you know; so that the good work begun in you may come to perfection in God's best time.

Thus prayeth your honors devoted in all service  
Tho. Wolfall

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<sup>4</sup> Here, "leisure" does not mean idleness. Rather it refers to the opportunity to do something; time at one's disposal. The concept of "free time" being used for "idleness" would have been abhorrent to any Puritan. As Thomas Brooks wrote, "Idleness is the time of temptation, and an idle person is the devil's tennis-ball, tossed by him at his pleasure" (*The Privy Key of Heaven*, "Means, Rules & Directions"). Thomas Watson, *A Godly Man's Picture*: "An idle person is the devil's tennis ball, which he bandies up and down with temptation—until at last the ball goes out of play!"

## *Preface*

To the Christian Reader, grace and peace,

### *How This Book Came to be Written*

This discourse being delivered in certain sermons to a private congregation in the city of London; the notes whereof falling into the hand of divers [various] of my loving friends; by whose motion I was encouraged to commend them to a more public view.

### *Fighting Sin is Needed in This Wicked World*

This discourse is not unsuitable for these times, It is also a good means (through God's blessing) to appease and assuage those inward boilings of envy, hatred and other exorbitant lusts [extremely strong desires; not merely sexual desire] in the hearts of men: Those scandalous and scurrilous speeches that issue of their mouths, and also those fell [cruel] and fierce dissensions that break out in men's lives; not only to unnecessary suits in law, but also to unjust quarrels and duels; even to the endangerment of the loss of soul and body. All these things are nothing else but the fruit of unmortified lusts [extremely strong desires] James 4:1.

These [desires] as they are born and brought up with us, so often like the demons were to the sons of Sceva [Acts 19:14], the desires have become too strong for us. It is dangerous living among lions. Is it not dangerous living among lusts, every one of them seeking fiercely to war against the soul?

### *Sin Causes Bondage*

There be three things that men do greatly desire, equity, liberty and peace: but so long as sin lives and lust lords it over the soul there is no justice to be expected: Such as the tree is, such will be the fruit. And if the bramble rule, it will burn up the cedars of Lebanon (Judges 9:7-21). Nor can we expect liberty, for the law that is in our members will lead us away captive the liberty that is given to the flesh does but bring the spirit into bondage; and what peace can we expect where is no peace with God?

### *Kill Sin Before it Kills You*

If then (Christian) you would have justice, then do justice and kill sin before it kills you.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> John Owen famously wrote, "Do you mortify; do you make it your daily work; be always at it whilst you live; cease not a day from this work; be killing sin or it will be killing you. Your being dead with Christ virtually, your being quickened with him, will not excuse you from this work" (*The Mortification of Sin in Believers*, chapter 2). It must be noted that Wolfal published his book in 1641, when Owen was 25 years old, and one year prior the date of Owen's conversion. Owen published his work in 1656. There are numerous points of comparison

If you would have liberty, then let not sin reign (Rom. 6:12). For therein does the great strength of it lie. Sampson was easily taken when his locks were shorn (Judges 6:20). So you may easily subdue sin when the regiment of it is taken down [i.e., when its soldiers are withdrawn]. If you would enjoy that peace of God which passes all understanding, then make no provision for the flesh. Instead mortify the flesh by the help of the Spirit, and you will have peace internal here and eternal hereafter.

Now for as much as this discourse is to help you therein, I do therefore heartily commend it unto thee. I have avoided prolixity, lest I should tire the reader; and too much brevity, lest I should wrong the matter. I have rather fallen on this subject, because I find few that have done it, and because I found some such spirits as have labored to cry it down as altogether unnecessary after conversion. If there be any such into whose hands this treatise shall fall, let me so far prevail with them as not prejudge what they do not mean to read lest they be numbered among those fools who speak evil of what they know not.

To conclude (Christian) thou hast my labors, thou hast my prayers, when thou dost approach the throne of grace, let me have thine,

*Thomas Wolfall.*

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between Owen's more famous work and Wolfal's book. Whether Owen made direct use of Wolfal's book or whether Owen and Wolfal drew from a common stock of imagery and doctrine may never be fully known. A few of the many points of comparison between the two works will be shown in the footnotes. Perhaps a future student of the era and the development of doctrine will develop this point further. Ed.

## **THE DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE OF MORTIFICATION**

*For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:13)*

## Chapter 1

### *Introduction to the text with the coherence of the foregoing part of the chapter.*

The common tidings that has been found in our ears from the churches abroad, for divers [many] years together has been upon the point of nothing except wars and rumors of wars, of leading into captivity, or garments roiled in blood.<sup>6</sup> Insomuch as that country in which is plenty of corn and wine, as the garden of Eden, is now as a land forsaken, or as a desolate wilderness; nay a very field of blood.

And howsoever we of this nation have but heard of this among us, no leading into captivity, nor complaining in our streets. Yet the sword of the Lord has been down against us and hath slain thousands and ten thousands in our streets.

Now the general cause of those lamentable desolations abroad and the hand of God at home is chiefly this: that we go not to war with ourselves; we do not slay those lusts of ours that fight in our members.<sup>7</sup> For if you walk after the flesh, you will die; not only a death of the body, but a second death: The soul shall suffer eternal torment. But if you mortify the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit, then you will live eternally.

#### *The Difference Between Walking After the Spirit and Walking After the Flesh*

To make way unto the matter at hand, our apostle lays down certain differences such as *walk after the flesh* and others that *walk after the Spirit*.

##### *The Differ as to Their Interest*

In respect of the object that they aim at, the one minds the things of the flesh, the other the things that are above; such as a man is, such is his mind. A carnal man and a carnal mind: the wisdom that is not from above, *is earthly, sensual and devilish*; but that which is from above *is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy* (James 3:15-17).

##### *They Differ as to Their Goal*

They differ in their ends: for the end of the one is life; the end of the other is death:

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<sup>6</sup>The 17<sup>th</sup> Century saw a series of vicious wars fought both in England and across Europe. Ed.

<sup>7</sup> James 4:1.

“Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices” (Proverbs 1:31).

### *They Differ in Their Affections*

They differ in their affections [emotions, desires]. Those that walk after the flesh are at enmity with the law of God (Rom. 8:7-8) are not subject unto it, neither can they be, and being they are not, they cannot please God.

Whereas on the other side, they that are of the Spirit, Christ dwells with them, and takes up his habitation in their hearts, sups with them, and they with him: Happy and thrice happy that house which hath him for an inhabitant, for this possession of Christ does imply the dispossession of sin, *For if Christ be in you the body is dead* (Rom. 8:10).

### *Sin and Christ Cannot Dwell Together*

But of sin, as Dagon could not stand with the Ark (1 Sam. 5:3), so no more can sin and Christ inhabit together. We cannot serve these two masters. Again, as the Spirit puts sin to death, so he quicken us [makes us alive]: The same Spirit which raised Christ shall quicken us; wherein he shows that the work of our regeneration is great, even as great as that of the resurrection. Regeneration being the internal renovation of the soul, and resurrection the external restoration of the body to its reunion with the soul.

Hence our Apostle draws an effectual inference to persuade men to withstand the enticements of the flesh, from this, that there is no service due that does belong to it; we are not debtors to it, that we should follow it.

### *Choose*

*For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* (Romans 8:13). “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

### *Outline of the Topic*

So I here set before you both these, and yet my desire is the same as Moses, that your souls might live, which undoubtedly you may do if ye follow Saint Paul’s direction here, *If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live* Here you may observe,

1. A description of our natural corruption, it is called the deeds or practices of the body.

2. Here is our duty what we should do against it, namely, to contend against it, and to mortify slay it.
3. The means whereby it must be done, by the Spirit.
4. The reward is that promised, *ye shall live*: which is a large promise, seeing it contains in it all the happiness that we are capable of, called a crown of life for the greatness and everlasting life for continuance.

## Chapter 2

### *Of the means how to find out our natural condition by a threefold inquiry.*

To begin with the first, the description of our natural corruption: It is called the “deeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13). What does this mean? When men that go to war, the first thing that they do is endeavor to find out the nature of their enemy. So it must be in this spiritual warfare, we must first endeavor to find out this our spiritual and mortal enemy, who he is: and secondly, where he lurks; and thirdly, how he seeks to fortify himself.

#### *Who is this enemy?*

We know that he contends against the Spirit, and labors to withstand all the good motions of it. In the first section of Romans 8, he is called “the flesh.” In verse 13, he is called “the body”.

#### *“The Body” Means Indwelling Sin*

Now *the body* is sometimes taken physically for the substance of the body consisting of flesh and blood; or else morally and in a metaphor for sin and vice compared to a body. And so I conceive it must be taken here; for conceive of the body as it is merely natural, and so it is good, and those effects that do issue from it must needs be good: again, the body in the production of her action is but the handmaid to the soul; and the soul is the great wheel of the clock, that moves all the inferior wheels by her motion: now the denomination in propriety of speech comes from the better part; therefore it must be taken here for that natural corruption, that does abide in the body and the soul.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The mere physical body is not an evil thing. Therefore, when Paul speaks about the body in Romans 8:13, he does not merely mean the physical body. Paul speaks of the “flesh” having “desires” (Rom. 13:14). It is absurd say that a mere corpse having *desires*: Desire is a soulish attribute; it is a thing of the spirit. In addition, the physical body has no independent ability to function: Rather, it does what the soul commands. This is obvious: remove the soul from the body and the body does nothing.

Since “body” cannot mean the mere flesh and bones, it must mean the influence of sin which affects both the body and the soul.

This is consistent with Puritan teaching generally. For example, in his work *The Mortification of Sin in Believers*, John Owen comes to the same conclusion concerning the mean of Paul’s phrase, “the body”:

*The body*, then, here is taken for that corruption and depravity of our natures whereof the body, in a great part, is the seat and instrument, the very members of the body being made servants unto unrighteousness thereby, Romans 6:19. It is indwelling sin, the corrupted flesh or lust, that is intended.

Ed.

So St. Ambrose on Romans 7.24, he calls it there that mass of corruption that is inherent in us; it is all our sin, as it were making up that body of sin, that as a body consisting of many members do but make up one entire body; so sin, though it spread itself into every part of our bodies to make them members of sin and into every faculty of the soul to make them weapons of unrighteousness, yet still it is but one.

***If We Saw our Body of Sin as the Monster it is, we Would Flee in Terror***

Take notice how that sin it makes a man deformed and a vile creature, that while he carries about him a body having in it natural life, he carries another body that hath in it the symptoms of death, nay and that will draw the other to the same condition with itself; nay, if one should tell you of a monster that had something like a serpent, nay something like a devil. This monstrous birth of sin does contain all that in it, if not more: are not men like the cruelest beast, the lion; like the most poisonous creature, the serpent, nay children of Satan (John 4.44). O, that we could see ourselves as we are: we would be ready to fly from ourselves as Moses did from his rod, when it became a serpent (Ex.3.4), and to abhor ourselves in dust and ashes.

***Where Does the Enemy Lodge?***

If you inquire where this enemy is, you will hardly believe that he is so near you, nor near so favored of you as indeed he is; that such a desperate enemy as this should lodge in your houses, feed at your tables, and lie in your bosoms, is not so strange as true, nor more true than lamentable.

Men in this case are David, who did not stick to condemn the injustice and cruelty of the man in Nathan's parable that took the lamb from his poor neighbor when he had no need, having sufficient or rather superfluity of his own; but alas the good man little thought that all this had been done by himself (2 Samuel 12). Even so it is with us, when we hear from the Word that there is such a thing as a body of death, a heart that is desperately wicked, and a *law of the members that leads men captive to sin* (Rom. 7.24; Jer. 19.9).

***People do not Like This Truth Shown by God's Word***

It is easily granted by that so it is, but yet will they be loath to yield, or to have such a thought in themselves, that they are the men: and hence it is that we are like sick men that complain of their bed, when the cause is their bones; and of the sharpness of their physic [medical treatment], when the fault is in themselves.

So it is with men in the case of sin, when it lies on the consciences of men and makes them restless, they complain of the condition as too hard and heavy, and of the Word, which is

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the physic for the soul as too sharp and bitter. When as they look not into the cause which is the body of death that lies in our own bosoms: and as we see not our sins, so neither do we see the danger that we are in.

### ***The Fact That Sin Lurking Within Our Hearts Cannot be Escaped***

But as it was with Balaam, though the angel was before him with his drawn sword, yet he saw him not, but falls out with the poor ass as if all the fault had been in the harmless beast; whereas had not the ass stood still, Balaam had been slain and all this came from his covetous heart; which he would take no notice of (Num. 22:22-35). So men are ready in case that sins be charged on them and even the danger ready to approach, yet do not see it, but are ready to quarrel with such as labor to keep them from it.

### ***We Should Weep Over Indwelling Sin***

But howsoever men labor to put their sin one to another, as we toss a ball, and bandy it from one to another, and every man from him, yet let him know, that they go but herein about a vain shadow, and disquiet themselves in vain. It would be counsel, *stand in awe and sin not, commune with your own heart hearts in your bed and be still* (Ps. 4.4): or as some will have it, bleed and that in deed should be our care, that when we have found this enemy which is the disturber of our peace, we should enter in our chambers and bewail our misery, if it were possible, even with tears of blood.

### ***How Does Indwelling Sin Make Itself Secure?***

Lastly, how he [sin] seeks to fortify himself and to this end observe that the flesh and this corruption is such an enemy as is never out of action: Thence it is that God complains, *My people have chosen two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that will hold no water* (Jer. 2.13). So that in this sin of man there is a turning from God the chief good as the fountain of all their happiness, which is ever a living spring that never fails; God all-sufficient who gives grace and glory and every good thing (Ps. 84.11; Jer. 9.27).

### ***What Happens as We Turn From God***

Now we first turn our backs on God and not our faces to him, and then we fall to these empty and broken vessels; cisterns they are, but cisterns that hold no great matter; nay, broken cisterns that will not hold any thing at all. So as there is neither solidity nor certainty in the comfort that they give, nor solid and sweet, because they are from the cisterns, and smell of the cask. Surely man *disquieteth himself about a vain shadow* (Ps. 39.6).

### ***Turning From God is Like Eating a Shadow***

Were it not folly, or rather a madness in a man that should come into an orchard, upon the trees whereof did hang much fruit, sweet and pleasant, yet should leave them and seek to disquiet himself to gather up the shadow. The philosopher calls man a tree turned upside down. But by sin it is that a man is a man that is quite altered and goes downward, like the young man from *Jerusalem to Jericho* (Luke 10), spoiled of his goods, wounded and left half-dead.

### ***Our Enemy Robs Us of Our Good***

So it is here, we in our departure from God to meet this enemy that despoils us of all those ornaments we had, and we are wounded with guilt, and the stains of sin, and left in such a lamentable condition, as did not that good Samaritan come, our Lord Jesus Christ, and pour in the oil of his own grace, and the wine of his dear sweet blood, we should perish everlastingly.

## Chapter 3

### *Of activity of lust<sup>9</sup> proved by two particulars*

That sin is thus practical [engages in actions, practice] and full of action will appear if you consider two things:

1. The fruitfulness and the plentiful increase that it does bring forth.
2. And the power and vivacity that there in sin, both which will set out, that the enemy against whom we do contend against is an active and stirring enemy.

#### *Sin Spreads With Great Speed*

For the first, sin, it brings forth with much speed and celerity, *Then desire<sup>10</sup> when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death* (James 1.15). Even as when you cast a stone into a pond that begets a circle, and that begets a greater, and so they multiply until be many, and that on a sudden. So is it case of sin, one sin begets another speedily, and the reason is, because it is the nature of the worst kind of fruit to spring fastest.<sup>11</sup>

#### *No one Needs to Cultivate Weeds or Sinful Desire*

You need not plow for weeds, nor sow cockle nor hemlock in the furrows of your field, they will grown of themselves. So it is with the ill weeds of sin, they come up of their own accord; nay, though we labor to weed out these corruptions, yet will they sprout and grow again. If you ask me why that grace grows so slowly and sin with such speed, I answer as the Egyptian midwives did unto Pharaoh when he asked them why they slew not the male children, they answered, because they are not as the Egyptian women, but lively and are speedily delivered (Exod. 1.19).

So it is in this case, grace at the first is weak, compared to a grain of mustard seed, and falls into a barren soil, our corrupt hearts, and there it is that it comes up so slowly; but sin, that is strong and is in a soil that it likes, and therefore comes up with more celerity.

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<sup>9</sup> By “lust”, Wolfal means strong desires –whether sexual or otherwise. Here “lust” refers to the profound desires to sin caused by indwelling sin. The wording comes from Galatians 5:17, where the word often translated as “desire” was previously translated by the English word “lust”. Ed.

<sup>10</sup> In Wolfal’s translation, the word “desire” was rendered “lust”.

<sup>11</sup> Again, this is much in common with other Puritan teaching. Thomas Brooks in his work *Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices* writes that, “Sin is a plague, yea, the greatest and most infectious plague in the world .... The sin that is in one man’s heart is able to infect a whole world, it is of such a spreading and infectious nature.”

### ***Sin is Like a Fruitful Tree***

Sin is fruitful in that it increases. Sin, though it be little at the first, yet grows apace [quickly, swiftly]. A man that begins with smaller sins, those make way for greater, as it is said of Sodom, *it was very great, and the cry was multiplied* (Gen.18.20): so the cry came; grievous sins do make a great cry.

#### ***When Men First Sin, They Little Realize What Sins Will Follow***

Hazael was afraid to hear of that wickedness which after he was not ashamed to commit.<sup>12</sup> Sin is like that which Elijah saw, which was at first no broader than a man's hand, yet it spread and spread till it covered the whole heavens.<sup>13</sup> So it is when men first begin to fall to some little [sin]. [Little] do they know how they shall be carried before that they will return again.

Israel is call the Virgin Israel, but behold, afterward her great transgression and her mighty sins made the prudent to keep silence, and brought such a storm and inundation of wrath upon them that a wailing should be in the streets and vineyards; the day of the Lord should be a day of darkness (Amos 5.1, 13 & 16).

#### ***Sins Lead to Sins, Like a Troop of Soldiers***

When we speak of the works of the flesh, we may say as Leah said when Gad was born: Behold a troop comes, as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, et cetera: seventeen in number (Gal. 5.19). And the reason of this multiplication of sin is in respect of the multiplicity of objects each of them being a bait to entice us unto sin, and withal, the multiplicity of occasions, that are as bridges to lead unto evil: That we had need every day to pray, *Lord lead us not into temptation*: and the greatest temptation of his own heart, for every man is tempted when he is drawn away with his own concupiscence [strong desire for sin] and is enticed.

#### ***Indwelling Sin is Constant in its Efforts***

Lastly, sin is fruitful in respect of the continuance and lastingness thereof. God complains of the thoughts and imaginations of man's heart, and they are evil, and only evil, and that continually. (Gen. 6:5 & 8:21). Contrary to all other breeders, who though they been fruitful, yet nature decays and time makes them barren.

#### ***Eject Sin***

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<sup>12</sup> This story appears in 2 Kings 8:7-15. Ed.

<sup>13</sup> This is found in 1 Kings 18:41-46. Ed.

But now sin as it is said, it gathers strength by its motion. So it is here in sin, it holds on and goes on. And that as St. Paul speaks of ill men and seducers, that they grow worse and worse (2 Tim. 3.13), and as the prophet complains, *How long shall wicked thoughts lodge in you* (Jer. 4.14)? He does not say that evil thoughts may not be in you, but they should not lodge. The word is to lodge all night, that is as if he should say, though you sin, beware you continue not in it. Though you be angry, let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

***To Engage in Sin is to Give Sin More Strength***

To fall into sin, is as if a man should fall into a deep pit. And to continue in it is as if a man should roll a great stone upon it, for by falling into sin, he falls into the snare of the Devil; and by continuance [in it he] entangles himself more and more, as a wild bull in a net, who the more he rages, the faster he is entangled.<sup>14</sup> And thence it is that custom in sin is as hard to be left as to wash an Ethiopian white or for a leopard to change his skin.

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<sup>14</sup> This is practical and important point: How often as the one enslaved to alcohol or drugs or sexual immorality said, “One more time and then I will done.” To do it one more time, is to give it more strength. Sin is never exhausted with effort. Ed.

## Chapter 4

### *Of the power and authority that unmortified lusts puts forth in us*

The second demonstration on whereby it may appear that this enemy against whom we do contend is thus active will appear from the power and authority of sin. As they answered Jehu when he asked them to fight for their master's son: *Two kings* (they say) *stood not before him* (2 Kings 10.4): So may I say of sin (and I would it were not too true) that two of the worthiest kings that ever reigned in the world, both for piety and wisdom, were foiled by this enemy, namely, David and Solomon. And if they did not stand before it, how careful should we be that we be not entangled in it.

#### *Sin Has the Power of a King: Romans 5:21*

How does it have the power of a king?

#### *First, Sin is said to "Reign unto death"*

Sin is said to reign unto death, as it was when the Israelites desired a king, Samuel told them what he would be like and what he would do: He (meaning that wicked king Saul) will take your sons for his service and your daughters to be his handmaids; nay the best of your vineyards and olive yards for his service [1 Sam. 8.10].

#### *Sin will bring you into its service*

So it is with sin when as it reigns, it will bring all to his service: This tyrant sin will take the choicest wits [smartest, most able people] and make them plot for him; and will make them wiser in their generation, than the children of light.

He will take the choicest of your strength, even your young and flourishing days, and set you into his work to dress his vineyards, and to reap his harvest: as he did with Absalom, Manasses, and the prodigal son.

Nay he will take every faculty [ability, functionality] of your souls, and engage them in the common quarrel against Christ; and every member of your body, make them weapons of unrighteousness to serve sin. And indeed the very reason why sin is such a fearful and dreadful enemy, is because it makes itself a king.

#### *As long as Sin reigns, it will ravage*

For suppose we [let us suppose] sin to be dethroned and put from his dignity, and behold you shall find him like Sampson without his locks – as another man (Judges 16.19). But as long as sin reigns, though it be as the bramble (Judges 9.15), yet it will be strong enough to set fire on the goodliest cedars of the forest – as you see in Jotham's parable. Nay, it fears no more to enter into the palace of princes than it does to assault the beggar's cottage.

## ***Second, Sin Rules by Law. Romans 7:23***

As sin is a king, so he rules by his laws, *I find a law in my members* leading me captive unto sin. This law, it stands in opposition to the law of God: that is, that it fights against it. Now a law is properly nothing but a rule whereby we are to work. So it is with sin, it has a rule whereby it goes, and that whereby they<sup>15</sup> frame and direct all their actions. Now because they that have mind to live in sin, and withal find that conscience does condemn that course whereby they walk. Hereupon they frame unto themselves another law, which may be as the city of refuge against conscience: who, like an avenger of blood, hunts after malefactors.

*The Nature of Sin's Law:*

### Sin would abolish God's Law

Sin lays down this as a principle: *The law of God is too heavy a burden, it is too hard a task master.* Therefore, as Jeroboam pretended unto the people of Israel that it was far for them to go up to Jerusalem, therefore he made them calves at Dan and Bethel<sup>16</sup>; so carnal reason says,

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<sup>15</sup> In this section Wolfal speaks indiscriminately about the party engaging in the sinful rebelling, sinful desire and sin itself, referring to “sin”, “lust,” and “they” – that is persons who are acting in accordance with sin’s desires. This appears to be the result of incomplete editing (the original transcript has many such problems). I have remedied some of the shifts in actor by removing the references to “lust” and some of the references to “they”.

However, some of the ambiguity is useful, in that while Indwelling Sin is an actual actor, it is in and through human beings – their body and soul – that such action takes place. There may be a bit of confusion, but not enough to obscure his argument.

<sup>16</sup> After Solomon’s death, his kingdom divided between Israel and Judah. The northern kingdom, Israel, was led by Jeroboam. To keep the people from returning to Jerusalem – in the southern kingdom – to worship, Jeroboam set up idols within his own kingdom:

And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David. If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.” So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, “You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.” And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan (1 Kings 12:26-29) .

that the law of God is too far a journey, full of difficulty and danger. It is like Rheoboam's yoke that was intolerable.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the wicked heart of man labors to bring an ill report upon the pure law of God. And hence it is that our antinomians<sup>18</sup> and libertines labor to overthrow the law of God – that which Christ came to establish, these men endeavor to abolish (Rom. 3.31).

Such a generation of men as this creep into houses and lead away silly women laden with lusts, that is by putting them into a form of godliness, telling them that Christ having taken away the guilt and punishment of sin, there is nothing [for them to do], no need to make the law as a rule or to mortify their corruptions (2 Tim. 3.6).

Flat contrary to the Apostle, that *such as are in Christ do mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts* (Gal. 5.24). But let such take heed as do endeavor to bring an ill report to this good law of God, that the Lord say not as he did against those that brought an ill report of the good land, *unto whom he swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest* (Ps. 95.11).

### Sin would establish a new law

Seeing that God's law will not serve their turns [the law of God is not to Sin's desires], they frame another of their own, that will be subservient for the accomplishment of their ends. They are compared to such as kindle a fire and compass about [surround] the sparks (says God), *in the light of your fires, and in the sparks that you have kindled, this shall you have of mine hand, you shall lie down in sorrow* (Isa. 50.11)<sup>19</sup>.

To kindle this fire is to hatch and forge some new rule as a light to walk by. And to compass it with sparks, is as it were to blow it up with carnal and fleshly arguments. And then to walk in the light of it, is to labor, to carry, to enforce all their actions according unto that rule. And hence it is that there are so many sects and so many ways that men walk in.<sup>20</sup>

It is because they are not contented with that fire that burns on God's altar: the pure light of the word, but like Nadab and Abihu, they kindle strange fire of their own (Lev. 10:1-2). But

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<sup>17</sup> Rheoboam ruled at the death of his father Solomon. The people who had been greatly worked during Solomon's reign asked for relief from the many public labors. Rheoboam listened to the counsel of his younger advisors and told the people, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions" (1 Kings 12:14).

<sup>18</sup> Antinomian means to be without any law. This person claims that since salvation is by grace, a professing Christian can live in any way without eternal consequence.

<sup>19</sup> In this instance, I have kept Wolfal's original translation since the modern translations use various words in place of the word "sparks" from the KJV, and Wolfal relies upon the word "sparks" in his argument.

<sup>20</sup> During the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, there were a great many heretical sects presenting themselves as "true" Christianity.

this shall they have at God's hand: their light shall be turned into darkness, and their sparks into ashes, and lastly their joy shall turn into sorrow. For as the ark and Dagon could not stand together [1 Samuel 5:1-7], so no more will these stand long, because they are like a building laid on a sandy foundation, or as grass on the house top.

*It colors all with fair pretenses* [attractive and false arguments/reasons]

That the mind may be better persuaded to go along according to this rule, the flesh labors to color all over and to set a fair floss on a foul cause. And if you mark it, there is no sin so vile but men will find out some color and some excuse to make it no sin.<sup>21</sup> Or else to make venial, and so little that it may lodge in his heart with as much safety as Lot did in Zoar.<sup>22</sup>

We want not [do not lack] examples of both [of] these. For the former you see Saul is charged by Samuel to have transgressed the commandment of the Lord. No, says Saul, I have obeyed the commandment of the Lord. But then saith Samuel, *what means then the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen in mine ear?*<sup>23</sup> So may we say when men would excuse themselves from sin, and say, we have good hearts to God. We may ask them what means their swearing and their drinking and their profane and unchaste speeches? *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks* (Matt. 12:34).

Some again confess the fact, but excuse it. Either they were ignorant, and knew it not. Whereas our ignorance is a sin, and when we add sin to it, we make the sin double. Or they did sin, but it was with no ill intent, and therefore, it was but an infirmity. I confess the more evil there is in the intention, the more wicked is the action. But I do not see how there can be an evil action without an ill intention. For if the tree were good, then the fruit would be good. And

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<sup>21</sup> This precise point is developed at length by Thomas Brooks in *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, "Satan's Devices to Draw the Soul to Sin", device 2 ("By painting sin with virtue's colors"), and device 3 ("By the extenuating and lessening of sin").

<sup>22</sup> The reference comes from Genesis 18:19-20. The plea of Lot to spare Zoar because it was a "little" city was a frequent image among Puritan writers to describe the plea of indwelling sin. This image was well-drawn in Gurnall's *The Christian in Complete Armor*:

Who is able to express the conflicts, the wrestlings, the convulsions of spirit the Christian feels, before he can bring his heart to this work? Or who can fully set forth the art, the rhetorical insinuations, with which such a lust will plead for itself? One while Satan will extenuate and mince the matter: It is but a little one, O spare it, and thy soul shall live for all that. Another while he flatters the soul with the secrecy of it: Thou mayest keep me and thy credit also; I will not be seen abroad in thy company to shame thee among thy neighbours; shut me up in the most retired room thou hast in thy heart, from the hearing of others, if thou wilt only let me now and then have the wanton embraces of thy thoughts and affections in secret. [Part First, Branches First and Second].

<sup>23</sup> This story is found in 1 Samuel 15.

therefore let me tell you, that to excuse your sin is all one as to cover your sin (Prov. 28.13). And you know that he that hides his sin shall not prosper.

## Chapter 5

### *Arguments to prove sin active*

Now it remains that we give some argument whence it comes to pass that this enemy is so active.

#### *The Stoutness of Sin*

The first is taken from that stoutness and stubbornness that is in it, such a height of pride is in it that it is not nor cannot be subject unto the law of God. Nay, it is not afraid to contest against the Holy Ghost, and to say unto the Almighty, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy law: *What is the Almighty that we should serve him?* (Job 21.14-15).

#### *A Rebellion Against God*

And hence it is that St. Gregory in his moral makes it *regina peccatorum & vitiorum* (Mor. 31) [Queen of sin and corruption/vice]. For whereas all other sins fly away and labor to hide themselves from God as Adam did amongst the tree of the Garden; and as Saul among the stuff; but only this stoutness of spirit is that which labors to rebel against God, nay and to exalt itself above God and all that is called God (2 Thes. 2.4).

#### *The Active Pride of Sin*

The Lord would have his will to be done, but the proud heart will do his own, as they said. *Let us break their bonds in sunder, and cast their cords from us* (Ps. 2.3). Now all this resistance cannot be done without much action and motion. We read that when Jeroboam revolted with the Ten Tribes from the house of David, he built two strongholds to defend himself and his kingdom from the inroads which might be made by his enemies (1 Kings 12.25). So it in this case, that when a man begins to revolt from God, then he considers how he may fortify himself against Him [God].

This is done by our high thoughts that labor to build themselves strongholds (2 Cor. 10.4). So as God's Word (if it may be) shall not come near, but they will repel the force of it. As it was said, the Lord was with the tribe of Judah and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, for they had chariots of iron.

#### *Sin Refuses to Hear*

So a minister of God and with whom the Lord is pleased to do great things. Yet some men have so fortified themselves with such stiff necks and such brazen foreheads that you may as soon fill the skin of the Leviathan with barbed irons and his head with fish spears (which Job

made a thing wondrous difficult, if not impossible (Job 41:1-10)) as to make any entrance upon him, or to convert him to God.

### ***Experiments (experience) of it.***

That sin is so active may appear in respect of the many battles it has fought, and the victories it has obtained: Some it has foiled, as it began with David on the top of his tower, and there it drew him to lust; and lust drew him to adultery; and his adultery drew him to murder; and it left him not there, but made him to cover it with a fair pretense. The sword devours one as well as another.

### ***Sin Hides***

And in this case men are like Rachel, that first stole away her father idols and afterwards, when they were sought for sat on them. So is it here, first to sin and then to hide it. And thus it foiled Peter, it found him first in the High Priest's hall, there he sinned against knowledge, in denying he knew Christ and against equity in that he denied that he was any of his Disciples, yea & against that promise that he had made, that though *all men would forsake him, yet will not.*

### ***Many have been overthrown by sin***

Whereas he was not the first: And as it has foiled many of God's dear servants, so hath it conquered and quite overthrown others, and fastened them to the ground as Jael and Sisera that they never did rise again (Judges 4.21). Thus it did with Judas, the hope of gain made him that he betrayed his Master, and then went hanged himself. And thus it was with the angels that fell: that they fell so wittingly and so desperately as there was no place found for repentance, as there was no man after his Fall.

Now as it is with a man that has fought many battles, and that has obtained many victories, sure no man will deny him to be active. So it is in this case, sin having given so many foiles & having gained so many victories who can say but sin is full of action, and restlessness till it has accomplished its ends.

### ***The Force and Help It Has***

We cannot marvel, though sin be active seeing that Satan helps it forward. In some he plays the *Rex* [king], and *rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience* (Eph. 2.2). And note this, where men are sons of disobedience there are they also servants unto the Prince of Darkness: They come at his case and go at his command (1 Pet. 5.8). Nay he makes them as like himself as may be.

The devil himself is fierce and cruel, thence he is called a roaring lion and are not his servant so? No bear more salvage, no tiger more fierce, no lion more cruel than they are. It better saith one, to be a beast, than compared to a beast, for a beast is good in his nature, but a man that is like a beast, he degenerates from that nature that should be in him.

### *A Murderous Enemy*

How does Pharaoh cause the male children to float on the river? How does Manasses cause Jerusalem to swim in blood? And what a monster was Herod that slew all those innocent babes from two years old and under? Nay how like was Nero to him that caused Christians to be put into coasts laid over with pitch and brimstone, and to burn all night, to the end that they might shew light to those that passed by.

The Devil hates our natural life: So does he make his servants to seek to take away the precious life of men. As you have heard, nay he labors to take away our spiritual life, that is to destroy our souls. As when Christ had sown the good seed, the enemy he comes and sows tares (Matt. 13.19), he was a lying spirit in the mouths of all Ahab's prophets (1 Kings 2.23), so he seeks to fan us as chaff, and to hinder our faith: so do all his servants.

### *False Doctrine*

How did Jannes and Jambres resist Moses to [his] face (2 Tim. 3.8)? And did not Elimas seek to turn the deputy from the faith (Acts 13.8, 9, 10), whom Paul not unfitly calls the child of the Devil and enemy of all righteousness: And for their activeness in all this, they are very industrious. As it was said of the Pharisees (of Jesuits) (Matt. 23.15) that they did compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when they had done, made him twofold more the child of the devil than themselves: and no wonder thought; they move so fast, for they needs to apace whom the Devil drives.

## CHAPTER 6

### *Instructions arising from the former doctrine*

#### *Why Does Sin Make Men Restless?*

If then sin be so active, this sets out whence [source; from where] it is that wicked men are so restless in sin, so as they are never at quiet, unless they be doing something or other that makes against God and the good of his people. David shows that the wicked plots against the righteous, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth and draws his sword and bends his bow and to all slay such as upright in heart (Ps. 37.12 & 14). Yea, he lays snares and seeks their hurt and speaks mischievous things and imagines deceit all the day long (Ps. 78.12).

#### *Sin Troubles the Man*

Hence it is that they are compared to the troubled sea, when it cannot rest (Is. 57). Whose waters casts up mire and dirt. And indeed as long as this body of sin is unmortified in us, it will be as troublesome to us, as Jonah was unto the ship which was tossed up and down on the waves till he was cast out. For howsoever that sin may formertime seem to lie quiet, and all in the man may seem to be at rest, yet alas it is neither a true nor long peace; but as it is with him that has an ague [an acute fever] upon him, albeit when the fit is over he comes to his temper again, and you would think that all were well, and that his enemy has left him; but alas the next day the poor man is disquieted with it again, and possibly more than before.

So it is in case of sin<sup>24</sup>, that though it may be that such a man that lives in sin is now quiet, and neither does discover his malice against God and goodness without, nor at present any appearance of a storm arising in his own conscience within; yet that unmortified body of death, that lodges within him will not rest till it bring both fear at home and trouble abroad. For this is the policy Satan to make the way fair unto us, until he have drawn us into sin, and then labors to *pierce us through with many sorrow* (1 Tim. 6.10).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Again, compare the statement of John Owen in *The Mortification of Sin*:

When sin lets us alone we may let sin alone; but as sin is never less quiet than when it seems to be most quiet, and its waters are for the most part deep when they are still, so ought our contrivances against it to be vigorous at all times and in all conditions, even where there is least suspicion.

*Mortification of Sin*, Chapter Two.

<sup>25</sup> Compare Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies*, “Devices to Lead us to Sin”, device 2, remedy 3:

The devil deals with men as the panther does with beasts; he hides his deformed head

And so it was with Saul, sometimes he was as calm as well as another man, but when the evil spirit came upon him then he was like a mad man. So it is with men that live in this case, while they are in their cold blood, and have no occasion offered, they are quiet. But if once there come a fit occasion, and that be followed with a temptation, then are they as tinder to the spark, that presently kindles and which begets a great flame. Behold, how great a matter this little fire [of sin] kindles (James 3.5).

### *How is Sin so Sudden?*

This shows whence it is that men are so suddenly wicked: Surely it must be from hence, because that sin is so active as it is. The activeness of sin makes a man impatient in delays, one being demanded why the earth was everywhere so fruitful of weeds, and yet so much ado to make fragrant and pleasant flowers to grow, albeit [a contraction of “although it be” so] it were with much cost and pains. Answered: that the earth was the natural mother to the one and stepmother to the other.

It is so in this case, the earth of our hearts does bring forth sin of itself, and has the fee in itself. But, for grace, alas it is a stepmother unto it: All that we can do is little enough to bring it to perfection. Whereas this body of sin is marking on like Jehu the son of Nimshi with much rage and malice, neither fearing God nor reverencing man (2 Kings 9).

When the old world began to corrupt their way, they are said to have had to their children mighty men, men of renown or name (Gen. 6.4). And the reason: because they were mighty in wickedness, and had got themselves a name of infamy. The way of sin is downhill, and can hardly stay itself till it come to the bottom. Little do men know how deep he may fall that there is a falling to sin; if he fall not as Eutychus, that fell from such a height, that he was taken up dead (Acts 20:7-12), yet may he fall as Mephibosheth did, and receive such hurt by it, that he may never claw it off all the day so his life (2 Sam. 9).

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until his sweet scent has drawn them into his danger. Until we have sinned, Satan is a parasite; when we have sinned, he is a tyrant. O souls! the day is at hand when the devil will pull off the paint and garnish that he has put upon sin, and present that monster, sin, in such a monstrous shape to your souls, that will cause your thoughts to be troubled, your countenance to be changed, the joints of your loins to be loosed, and your knees to be dashed one against another, and your hearts to be so terrified, that you will be ready, with Ahithophel and Judas, to strangle and hang your bodies on earth, and your souls in hell, if the Lord has not more mercy on you than he had on them. Oh! therefore, look upon sin now as you must look upon it to all eternity, and as God, conscience, and Satan will present it to you another day!

## *The Rise of Hypocrisy*

A man may be a notorious sinner and yet have a show and color [appearance] of piety. So that that were proud, heady, high minded & et cetera, yet they had a form of godliness, a rule that they went in by show — within as base Nero; without as austere as Cato. Such were the Pharisees that sought outwardly to justify themselves, but God knows your hearts says our Savior: that is, howsoever men could not, yet God both can and will. Hypocrisy is one of the fairest garments, that this body of sin can be covered withal [wholly covered], because that by this means the hypocrites is hidden from others and from himself:

### *Self-Deception*

From others by this, it has been that so many have showed unto men to have had the voice of Jacob and the hands were the hands of Esau (Gen. 27) and have pretended great piety, when their intentions have been barbarous and most prodigiously impious. As Jezabel pretends a fast and intends murder (1 Kings 21.9). And Absalom pretends the performance of a vow, yet intends treason; nay the worst of treasons against his father (2 Sam. 15.8). And those preachers of Philippi pretended to preach Christ, but their intentions were malicious (Phil. 5.15): but howsoever they think by this means to deceive others, yet in the issue [outcome] they deceive themselves; for while they are a deceiving others they do indeed deceive themselves.

### *The Evil of Hypocrisy*

And it were better openly to sin than to dissemble sanctity, and be sure, whosoever you are: that you carry a heart — and a heart; a balance — and a balance; that God will find out, and shall smite every such whited wall. And as old Ahijah said to the wife of Jeroboam, when came disguised, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be another? For I am charged with unbearable news for you” (1 Kings 14:6). So may I say unto such, that I have heavy tidings to tell them, and that is this, that they *are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity* (Acts 8.23). And if there be any fire in that bottomless Tophet hotter than another it’s prepared for the hypocrites; and, therefore, when God tells men of great punishments that the wicked shall have, he tells them that their punishment shall be with hypocrites; that is, making them a pattern of great punishment to others (Matt. 24.41).

### *The Self-Deceived Sinner*

Again, this body of sin it does so work and cover itself, that it makes a man to mistake his own condition; as they young man did when he said, *All these have I done from my youth* (Mar. 19:29). And yet poor soul, he knew not the deceitfulness of his own heart, that he was mistaken & had a deceitful hear that would not submit to the will of Christ.

And we read of Herod that he did many things until it came to the leaving of his Herodias, he was content, but there he stuck. So it is with men, they are so well conceited [think

well of] of their conditions, as he that goes a jot beyond them, goes too far and he that comes not to their pitch is too profane; and that rule which they have taken up is only rule: but to such I will say no more than our Apostle does, *Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall*, and that his foundation be not built on sand.

### ***How Suspicious we Should be of Ourselves***

Since that this body of sin is thus active, it should make us suspicious of ourselves. [We should] be very jealous over ourselves in all the actions that we do: seeing that there is one within us that has a hand in them that is our mortal enemy (Prov. 26.25), who albeit he may speak us fair and make his voice gracious.

Yet, as Solomon saith in another case, there are seven abominations in his heart. [It is as] if a man has a servant in his house that he neither can turn out nor may trust. Will he not then be suspicious of him and often call him to account? Yet behold such is our own hearts, deceitful above all things, and who can know it; it has such turnings and windings that unless we watch it narrowly, it will deceive us (Jer. 17.9).

Ask we our hearts this question, whether they went then at such a sermon, when the word was powerfully opened, it will answer as Gehezi did, *Thy servant went no where* (2 Kings 5:25). Ask it again, whether it does believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and eternal salvation: It will answer, yea; He has believed ever since he can remember and never doubted in all his life. Ask him again, whether he be in such a condition as he may go to the Lord's Table, he will answer again, go in peace. Thus like another treacherous Judas, he will for his own ends betray his own Master.

Now I appeal unto your own heart, whether this be so or no, whether you have not offered such strange fire unto God and thought that such blind and lame services would serve your turn. Have you not cause here to be suspicious of your secret enemy that lurks in your bosoms, that is ready to deceive itself and you?

When that King of Syria saw that his plots were still discovered, that his war did not prosper against the Kings of Israel, *Will you not tell me* (says he) *which of us is for the King of Israel?* So it should be with you, that when your designs and good purposes are interrupted, you should enter into your chamber and commune with your own hearts and call up all your thoughts together and say to them, *will none of you show me, which of you are for Satan?* I find many good motions that are stifled in the birth and a law of the members that does rebel against the law of the mind, and then complain of this enemy unto him that is able to help you and say, *O, wretched man that I, good Lord deliver me from this body of death!*

## Chapter 7

***Of the second principal thing, viz: the doctrine of mortification, which certain distinctions to clear it.***

### ***Rend Your Garments***

Now the second thing laid down in the text is the duty that is commended unto us by our Apostle, namely, that the deeds of the body are to be mortified. This is no other than that of the prophet, *Rent* [tear] *your heart and not your garments* (Joel 2.13). Now the renting of their garments was but (in the best use of them) to put them in mind of the disposition of their hearts and what serious thoughts of God would have them be *affected withal* [to be wholly affected]: They did use to rent garments either in case of some great evil of sin; or evil of punishment, the case of some great sin. So Hezekiah rent his close at the blasphemy of Rabsheke, the foul mouthed enemy of God (2 Kings 18). And so in case of some eminent danger, so Mordecai rent his garment out of trouble of heart for that great Massacre that was likely to befall the Jews (Esther 4.1).

### ***When We See Our Sin, It Should Cause us to Rend Our Hearts***

And may not the like misery sway with us<sup>26</sup>, to make us rent our hearts and mortify the deeds of the body, especially when we consider the greatness of our sins, both in respect of their number and of their nature that they are foul, and make us loathsome in the sight of God: for their quantity, they are as heavy as mountains of lead, and for their quality they are roots that bear gall and wormwood (Deut. 19.18).

### ***Do Not Let Sin Reign***

The like exhortation the Apostle gives, *Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof*. It is true that sin will remain in us, but it must not reign over us, for if grace reign in your hearts, then sin must not reign – grace will have no competitor.

We read of Alexander the Great, that he was never content till he had conquered all the world; so it is with grace, it is never at rest till it have conquered this little world, this body of sin, and put down every high thought that does exalt itself against God.

This exhortation is urged more plainly. Mortify your members that are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate desires, affections & et cetera. As before, sin is compared to

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<sup>26</sup> The same sorrow should be at work in us when we rightly see our sin. The Puritans deeply developed the doctrine of repentance, and made much of the necessity of a true sight of sin leading to sorrow. Thomas Watson's *The Doctrine of Repentance* is perhaps the clearest and best extended treatise on this matter.

a body, so here, particular sins are compared to so many members of that body, that as all the member do work together for the preservation of the whole, so does every least conduct and concur to the preservation and continuation of this body of sin.

### ***Mortification as External***

For the more distinct handling of the point, consider that mortification may be distinguished as something that is external and is without us [outside of us], or else as something that is internal and is down within us: As it is external it is said to be legal mortification, when as a man is dead in law, as a malefactor is said to be a dead man when he is condemned.

So sin is then said to be dead when it is forgiven and God is said to send his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that is, that sin should be certainly put to death (Rom. 8.3). As it was certain that Christ had taken our nature on him, a great comfort it is to a distressed soul that does cast itself upon the Lord Jesus Christ: though at first it doe not apprehend the power of sin mortified, yet apprehending our plenteous redemption purchased by Christ, he concludes, that sin shall certainly die, because Christ has already condemned it.

And as David said when Jonathon persuaded him to the contrary, *As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death* (1 Sam. 20:3). So whatsoever conceit [thought] the foolish heart of man may have, that his lusts are so strong, as there is not possibility of subduing them, yet for as much as the matter is now in the hand of Christ, who has past sentence on them, it is certain that there is but a step between them and death.

### ***Mortification as Internal: Initial Mortification***

Internal mortification is either initial or renewed. Initial mortification is that first work of sanctification, whereby the force and vigor of sin is broken and the body of sin has received such a deadly wound as maketh it incurable. Though a man in this case may go as the woman did from the one physician to another to have the issue of blood stayed; yet will it bleed still, there is no balm from no physician there: now this initial mortification is either general or special

#### ***Initial Mortification – General***

General: When there is a general [common, overall, everywhere] blow given to every sin when we do as the woman when she had lost her money did sweep the house, not only some, but every room of it, the whole house; thus, shall we be sure not to leave any sin without the mark of death upon. *Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded* (James 4:8); that is, that man that is truly mortified is such as is all over mortified. That is, there is no actual sin that sticks to his hand, nor any inward corruption that he does allow of in his heart.

The Pharisees were strict in the tradition of washing their hands, but negligent in purging out the hypocrisy of their hearts (Matt. 15.2). So likewise, the curse that is annexed unto sin and does follow it as sure as the day does the night, so sure will wrath follow sin.

*Do Not Rest Until Sin is Subdued*

Had we not need then to be very much grieved for them and to mourn in secret until they [the sins] be slain in us? Though Job's afflictions were many and great (Job 1.14), yet there is this remarkable, that there was one in every of these trials that escaped to come and tell him, so it is in this case with many that though there may seem to be a great mortification of sin, yet behold one or other does make an escape and comes tells us that all is not mortified.

Such a man is wise and liberal, but yet he is proud. Such a one is humble and courteous, and yet full of disordered passions. So that though men seek to color over their sins with never so many fair pretenses, yet if it be not so indeed, something will escape. As she said to Peter, you are sure one of his disciples, for they speech betrayeth thee (Matt. 26.73), so something will discover them at one time or another, either pride, or their covetousness or their passions. Like a dead fly spoils the whole box of precious ointment.

***Internal Mortification – Special***

There is a special mortification of special sins, that although for sins of ignorance a general mortification will serve the turn and is acceptable to God, yet because that there is much deceit lies in generals, we must descend to particulars. As David saith, *I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me*, it is not that I have sinned (Psalm 51.3; 1 Chron. 21.17).

*Some Sins Take Special Attention*

Again, all sin is not of equal proportion, but some are weaker and some are stronger, like the sons of Sceva (Acts 19:13-17), and they are not unlike to that kind of evil spirit that is not cast out but by prayer and fasting. Much ado there is to subdue them, there is some bosom sin that is so sweet and pleasant as it is compared to our right hand, in respect of the profit of it, and to our right eye in respect for the tenderness of it.

***There Will be no Peace Without Mortification***

Now against this we must contend, for as long as such special corruption lives in us (like as Pharaoh's blasted ear of corn) it devours the fat ones, so will that sin eat up all your spiritual comforts. Or as Saul said concerning David, as long as the son of Jesse lives the kingdom shall not be established to you (meaning Jonathan). So I say, as long as you do not contend against your special sin, the kingdom of heaven will never be established unto you, therefore labor to find them out one by one and having found them, pursue after them as the revenger of blood till you have slain them, that you never may come to carry tidings of the fall of the rest.

### ***Renewed Mortification***

The next is renewed mortification, that is in case that we renew our sins we must renew this work also. And this is either in regard of those daily infirmities that are the fruits of this body or sin that is in us; or else in case of a relapsing or falling foully into some great sin which does waste the conscience.

#### *Sin Flows From a Corrupt Fountain*

And therefore, when we have given unto sin some deadly blow, we must not then think that the work is done, for it is with us; as it is when a ship springs a leak, though they pump up the water, yet will it fill again. So it is with us, there is such a corrupt fountain as will still be troubling us.

#### *Fighting Sin is a Daily Task*

The same reason that may move us to say, give us this day our daily bread may also prevail with us to say, forgive us this day our daily sin. It should be our care every day to consider our ways and to examine our heart and not suffer our temples to take their rest nor our eyes in our heads until such time as we have caused our daily sin to sleep the long sleep of death. Believe it, if we would do this we should sleep more quietly, live more peaceably, and die more comfortably. This is that same wherein we may rejoice, for by our rejoicing that we have in Christ we die daily (1 Cor. 15.31).

Now to mortify sin every day is more easy, because it does not get that strength that it does if it be let alone.<sup>27</sup> The fire is quenched best when it is but a spark. And a bank of sea is easily repaired at the first. So it is in the case of sin, before this spark of sin ever set on fire the whole frame of nature and before this ocean of lusts have made such a large breach in our conscience at that which would have been but the work of a few hours becomes the work of many months.

### ***In the Case of Relapse***

In a case of a relapse, or of some great sin that has been the case of divers good men, they have fallen out of one sin into another to the wounding of their own conscience to the stilling of the good motions of the Holy Ghost, and to the opening of the mouths of the wicked to blaspheme the holy name of God and that holy profession they have taken in hand.

Now as we see by experience a relapse into a disease is dangerous, so a revolt into sin is very dangerous, because a man sins in that case against light and against conscience and against the good motion of the Spirit and makes way for the great enemy to return with a greater

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<sup>27</sup> Sin is easier to fight when it has been the subject of constant battle. Ed.

strength. Now by how much the disease is more dangerous by so much is the cure more difficult, howbeit, the matter be hard, yet it is not impossible.

Therefore, in such a case, and to that end, you must not deceive yourselves, you must search out the cause whereof this evil has befallen you, as it was when Israel turned their backs on their enemies (Josh. 7.8). Joshua sought out the cause and found that was one Achan that had troubled the whole camp. So should we sound out the cause. And when you have found it, say of it (as Saul did in another case (1 Sam. 14.38-39) when as God answered him not; know and see, saith he, where this sin has been this day, for it be Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.

So say I unto you, shew no pity on it, for sin can shew no mercy, and therefore good reason that it should have judgment without mercy. Alas brothers, lust is so dear unto some men that they will undo themselves and their souls to enjoy that, as it was said of Jacob, that his life was bound up in the life of Benjamin (Gen. 44.30). So may I say that men's hearts are so folded up in their lust, that you may as well pull out the one as purge the other.

## **Chapter 8**

### ***The Distinction Between Perfect and Imperfect Mortification***

#### ***Perfect and Imperfect Mortification***

Mortification is either perfect or imperfect. Perfect mortification is when there is a total abolishing of all sin, so as there is nothing that does remain. As God is said to wipe Jerusalem as a man wipes a dish, and turns it upside down (2 Kings 21:13). So when as sin shall be so wiped out, as there is none of the venom of sin that does remain or stick to us, but all is wiped off and utterly extinguished.

#### ***Mortification Will Never be Perfect in This Life***

But this cannot be expected in this life, not that God cannot, but that in his wisdom he seeth it not fit: *we know in part and we prophecy in part* (1 Cor. 13.9) but we must not look either for an absolute perfection of holiness, nor for a perfect freedom from sin, until we put of these tabernacles which when they shall be restored again at the resurrection then shall we be as the angels of God without either stain or remainder of sin; this shall be done hereafter,

#### ***The Reasons Why Mortification Will Never be Perfect in This Life***

##### *To Manifest the Power of God*

For the manifestation of the power of God, that though we have corruption within and fighting without, the great enemy that cast his fiery darts at us, yet the grace of God is sufficient for us, and his strength is made perfect in weakness (1 Cor. 12.9). This is our greatest perfection to see our imperfections that we see might glorify God more.

It was a great power of God to keep Lot in his integrity in that sink of sin, that City of Sodom, as it was to free him from the shower of brimstone that fell upon it (2 Pet. 2:7). So it is as great a power to keep his grace in the midst of such corruption as to have freed us from it, by his absolute power at the first, or to keep a spark in the midst of the sea.

##### *To Make a Distinction Between Our Pilgrimage and Our Rest.*

To put a difference between *viatores* [Latin, travelers] and *comprehsores* [Latin, those that have apprehended]; between such as are in their journey to the New Jerusalem that is above, and those that are citizens already. No man has the garland before the victory, nor the reward before the race is run. We must look for a heaven here and another hereafter, we contend here, that we may receive a crown hereafter. We are not to expect that which is not promised. Nay he has told us that his kingdom is not of this world.

##### *To Make us Prize Heaven.*

To make us prize heaven the more, where we know we shall be from sin; and desire to be dissolved more; that so we might be separated from this enemy that disturbs our peace, this enemy is he that make us (like those Hebrews) to hang up our harps and to weep by those banks of Babel [Babylon] when we remember Mount Zion which is above. It was Christ's usual journey from Bethany to Jerusalem, from the house of mourning to the vision of peace: so must we mourn here, that we may rejoice hereafter.

#### *To See Adam's Sin*

To let us see the sinfulness of Adam's sin, for if that we should have sin removed as soon as we are born, we should never be sensible of the greatness of that offense, nor of the weight and burden of original corruption, for if you would reason but thus with yourselves, if the weight of sin be so intolerable and the burden so heavy to a man regenerate; that he cries out, woe is me, for I am a man of polluted lips and dwell amongst a people of polluted lips (Is. 6.5); if he complain, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death* (Rom. 7:24).

If we ourselves groan under the burden of sin that is upon us, what would the weight of it be if God should lay it on the full measure: then we would cry as Cain that our punishment would be greater than we can bear. As they, finding out the length of the giants foot found out the length of his whole body; so may we by the weight of sin we feel be able to conceive of that we feel not; and not to say, as Paul did, *God be thanked through Jesus Christ our Lord, that though in my flesh I serve the law of sin, yet in my mind I serve the law of God* (Rom. 7.25).

#### ***Imperfect Mortification***

Imperfect mortification is when the work is begun but not finished, it is with us in case of mortification, as it was when the Israelites came to possess the land of Canaan, God would have them cast out the inhabitants by little and little, and not to be consumed at once; so is in this case it is not to be expected that sin should be consumed at once, but little and little.

#### ***Near and Remote Degrees of Mortification***<sup>28</sup>

For the better clearing hereof, observe two particulars, observe two particulars, whereby you may conceive by what steps and degrees sin is mortified. First, some of them are more remote. Secondly, some of them are near.

#### *Remote*

For the more remote degrees of mortification, give me leave first to entreat of them, as in going down a pair of stairs you must go down by degrees, step by step, so in brining down the

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<sup>28</sup> By "remote" and "near", Wolfal means general and specific. Ed.

proud heart, we must not think it can be done at once, but by a kind of gradual motion: we say in philosophy that *natura non facit saltum* [nature does not make leaps] that nature works successively and makes no leaps; for it is true in grace that it does admit of degrees (2 Pet. 3:18).<sup>29</sup>

### First Degree

The degree of remote degree is a breaking league with sin, for naturally, there is a league between sin and our souls. And they are like *Simeon* and *Levi* brethren in evil: sin is then pleasant unto them, and whosoever speaks against it are none of their friends; but now when we see that sin has deceived our soul, and played the Judas with us, that it has betrayed unto us, that it has betrayed us into the hands of Satan, and has procured the wrath of God upon us; then we break our friendship with it, and are sorry that we had ever any thing to do with it, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11), but rather reprove them; that is, we must not have any more to do with them. God charges the people of Israel to take heed that they marry not with the heathen, for they would turn away their sons and daughter from serving God (Dt. 7:3).

So will sin do if you make league with it, or do not break from it, and so procure the heavy wrath of God upon you; it is the charge which our Savior gives us those things that went into Babylon, *Come out of Babel, my people, be not partaker with her of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues* (Rev. 18:4, 2 Chron. 19:2). It was good speech of the son of the prophet to Jehosophat, should you help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord, *therefore is wrath upon you from the Lord*: So there is not a greater enemy unto God, not unto your salvation, then sin is. Therefore break your league with it lest you procure the fierce wrath of the Lord of heaven and earth against you.

### Second Degree

When men profess themselves open enemies unto sin, that is, when they hate every false way, and when no persuasion that lust can make nor proffer that can be persuasion that lust can make no proffer that can be propounded, will prevail with them; but they will stand like a mountain and will not be persuaded; so as those secret insinuations of their own hearts, and those venomous blandishments of Satan from them, as they viper [fell] from Paul's hand, without any hurt or taking any strong impression upon them: Where is the greatest unity and friendship, when such fall out, there is the greatest enmity and discord; thence it is that Solomon said that a brother offended is hard to win as a strong city and their contentions are like the bars of a castle (Prov. 18:19).

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<sup>29</sup> Mortification will move through three stages: First, you break off with the sin. Second, you'll previous love of sin will turn to hatred, you see it for what it is. Third, you do all things necessary to make sure that the sin is put to death (mortified). Ed.

So it is with this contention, because as their friendship has been great so also is it the contention stronger: Therefore, some of the martyrs when they have been pressed by their friends, to renounce their religion, with what indignation have they spoken, that if every hair of their head were a man, they would burn them all rather than go from the truth. And some have blessed God even that ever they came in prison or that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ all this out of a desire of the enjoyment of Christ, and the hatred of sin.

### Third Degree

To cut off all the strength & provision that the flesh can make, that so we may starve the flesh out of the holds that it has made for itself. So the Apostle put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14). Sure it is when men are careful for the body, and careless for the soul, when they expend the greatest part of their lives and means in the minding of the things that pertain to the satisfaction of the flesh, and in the prosecution of their lusts and pleasures, and say unto their souls *eat, drink, and be merry* (Luke 12:19): What do they all this while but foster and nourish that body of death, even unto the day of slaughter.

But on the other side [is] when a man does then make no provision for the flesh, when he lives as a pilgrim, and as a stranger, and does abstain from fleshly lusts, that fight against the soul (1 Pet. 2:11); when a man makes a covenant with his eyes that he will not look on a woman to lust after her; when he shuts his ears and will not hear the voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely; when that he looks to all his ways and takes heed, that he offend not in his tongue (Ps. 39:1); in one word that keeps his heart with all diligence that howsoever voluptuous and sinful thoughts may knock at the door, yet they may find neither entrance nor entertainment, when he hardens his heart against sin as Dives did that he would not permit Lazarus the crumbs that were under his table, but suffered the beggar to die at his door.

So when we deny our lust their least requests, and will not permit them the least or lowest room in our hearts, when we deal with sin as Elijah caused his servants that kept the door saith he, hold him fast & handle him roughly, or press him at the door (2 Kings 6:32); so should we do with sin, if he offer to make intrusion, repel him back with a holy violence. *I beat down my body, and bring my flesh in subjection that when I have preached to others, I myself may not be a cast away* (1 Cor. 9:27).

## Chap. 9

### *Showing Those More Near Degrees of Mortification*

#### *Degrees of Near Mortification*

Now I come to those that are more near degrees of mortification, as you see in war, there is many lesser assaults made before they win the main battle; so is it in this spiritual contestation and contention between the law of the members, and the law of the mind; between true grace and corrupt nature.

#### *First Degree: A Strong Reluctancy*<sup>30</sup>

First is that strong reluctancy that the spirit makes against the flesh, so there is very struggling who shall win the victory, a grievous war it is, and the greater that is not against enemies but guests (howbeit they are in deed secret enemies). The flesh musters up all her forces and set them in battle array, which as they are many in number, so are they strong and resolute every one ambitious of a crown: but now the soul it flies unto Christ as a prisoner of hope, oppressed by the enemy unto his stronghold (Zech. 9:12).

That as the Jews could have no King but Caesar; so a Christian will have none to reign over him but Christ, this reluctancy is the greater because that the object of their contention [the thing about which a Christian fights] is exceedingly weighty, it is as much a man's soul is worth, it is the losing or wining of a kingdom. It [the object of the fight] is not for the bounds, but for the inheritance, and therefore it is, that neither side will yield to the other: Satan will not yield up his right because they once belonged to him;<sup>31</sup> nor Christ will not lose his right, because he bought them with a price; hence it is that the kingdom of Heaven is said to suffer violence, *and the violent take it by force* (Matt. 11:12), there is nothing to be gotten without contention.

That you may not be mistaken in this business of so great consequence, give me leave to lay down some rules to know whether your war be a right war, yea or no; for when our Savior does exhort us to *strive to enter in at the strait gate* (Luke 13:24), he tells us that *many shall seek*

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<sup>30</sup> A strong determination to fight against sin. Ed. Chapters 9, 10 and 11 deal with the strength and general nature of the fight. The second element of "near" mortification is repentance: a broken and contrite heart. The question of contrition for sin is covered in chapters 12 -14. The third element of "near" mortification is killing sin, which is done by the Holy Spirit. The question of the Holy Spirit's work is covered in chapters 15-18. Chapter 19 provides certain practical instructions concerning the means we are to use to obtain the Spirit's effort in the killing of sin. Chapters 21 & 22 provide additional information concerning the nature of the Holy Spirit and His work. The book will then end with two chapters of exhortation and encouragement to this duty. Ed.

<sup>31</sup> See Pilgrim's Progress, Christian and Apollyon.

*to enter and shall not be able, showing that all striving will not serve your turns: not every one that says, Lord, Lord, shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 7:21); thence it is that Saint James tells us that we may ask and not receive because we ask amiss and this was the reason why such as shall at the end of the world come and say, Lord, Lord, we have prophecied in your name we have cast out devils, and in your name we have done many wonderful works; why such I say should be rejected because all this was not done in sincerity, and in a right manner; therefore for the clearing of it [responding to objections], take this rule.*

### ***How the Natural and the Spiritual Combat Differs<sup>32</sup>***

#### ***Differ in the Ground***

They differ in ground [basis] and so the quarrel, for howsoever that the quarrel may be occasioned from the same general ground in respect of the use of it, namely sin, yet in special the one looks at the sin as it is sin, the other at sin as it brings punishment after it, the one could he escape the punishment would be glad to enjoy his sin.

An example of the former you have in Cain, who made no great matter of his sin but indeed his punishment was greater than he could bear, and for the latter you have another example of Joseph, who notwithstanding the wanton solicitations he had from his mistress<sup>33</sup> and withal his own unmarried condition, and being in the strength of his youthful years, which is most licentious, and voluptuous, yet behold he repels them all with a most chaste resolution, *How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?* He thought not on the punishment that would follow, but on the sin as the main thing.

It was a good speech of him that said it, that he had rather be in hell without sin than in heaven with them on his conscience; and indeed what comfort could a man have in heaven, so long as he had a hell in his conscience. And on the other side, hell would be no hell to him, were his conscience fair. Therefore men should not think that all is well, because they find sometimes a troubled, or a trembling spirit, for the devils believe and tremble, and yet their spirit stout enough, and stubborn enough against God; so, it may be in men that conviction that they may have, although it may not be accompanied with any sound conversion, have you not seen many that when they have been in some great strait (as Balaam between the vineyards, not knowledge which way to turn to himself) either under some sad and heavy cross or else under some present peril of death: poor souls! How have they quarreled with their sins and with themselves, as

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<sup>32</sup> People may seek to put off sin for any number of reasons. For example, a man may not steal or commit adultery to avoid the punishment which would follow from theft or adultery. A Christian, seeking to please God, would also refuse these actions. From the outside, the refusal to steal or commit adultery may look the same, but the ground – the basis or motive – is different. Ed.

<sup>33</sup> Here the word “mistress” means the lady of the house, not adulterous paramour. Ed.

though they would never have had any friendship with them more: well, deliverance comes, and health comes, behold now the battle is over, they shake hands again with their lusts, and are the same men they were; but now if there be a principle of grace in you, that makes your hearts rise against sin, then, to say no more, go and prosper ye valiant men for God is with you.

### *Differ in the State*

They differ in respect of the seat of combat, the natural combat is bodily: Sometimes nothing but the distemper of the body, that is the seat of the conflict; a sick body does occasion and distempered and sick mind; is it not strange to see, what strange effects, that distemper of melancholy does produce, what fears and terrors have they felt at sometimes, as though they had been scorched in the flames of hell, what joys and exultations they have made at another time, as though they had been rapt up into the third heaven, and conflicts they have supposed they have passed through, yet all is nothing, but the production of a distempered body deeply affected with melancholy? Now this differs from the true combat.

First they differ as much as the shadow and the substance one from another: that combat between the flesh and the spirit is really true, but that is but imaginary, like as you see upon the stage, one is a king, another is a judge, another a soldier, which when the action is over, they are no such men, so is it in this case; all this combat is but a mere show.

In a true combat there are some scars, something that sticks to him after the battle, and some booty is carried away as a testimony of his valor, so a Christian that has got some ground against his enemy, he has got some strength against his lusts, as it was said of the house of David and Saul, that David's house did increase and Saul's decrease; so it is here, grace gains something at every combat, now after the combat is over, the melancholy person is as he was, there is alteration, if he profane before, so he is still or if he was civil before he is civil still.

They differ in their cure, a distempered body is cured with physic, good air and temperate diet, but who is he that can cure a sick, and distempered soul, not all the physicians in the world. Nay, let me speak a bold word: Not all the Angels in heaven are able by their wisdom to help a wounded spirit; it must be no less than the blood of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin and heals a sick distressed and distempered soul.

### *War Among the Passions*

Again the fear of this war is sometimes among the passions, so as one stands in opposition to another. Nay, as the spies that went to view the land Canaan said unto Moses that the land they went to search was a land that did eat up the inhabitants of it (Num. 13:32) so it is with our lusts, one lust is so predominant that it eats up another as you have an example in Herod, who being ambitious, did favor John, because he looked at the applause of the people (for all held John as a prophet) yet such was his lust to Herodias, that for her sake, he cast him into prison and afterwards cut off his head.

So it is said of Maxontia, that as he was cruel so was he incontinent, and sometime his lust of incontinence prevailed against that of cruelty as instance is given in a Christian virgin whom he attempted to have defiled in which case, saith my auther, that is incontineny got the victory of his fury; but now this war is not war amongst them, but against them all, as they that are Christ's do crucify the flesh with affections and lusts (Gal. 5:24): and the truth is that when as a man does suffer his lust to rule, is as if a man should suffer his feet to guide his head, or else the handmaid to rule over the mistress; so it is in this case for our passion should be guided by reason, and reason rectified by the spirit, and then things would go in a right order, therefore our Apostle does shew that the flesh lusts against the spirit, not that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, not that the flesh lusts against the flesh, for though the lusts of the flesh may be at discord one with another, it is but like that which was between Pilate and Herod, and albeit there was some contention between them, yet they both joined together against Christ; so that howsoever it be, that one lust may in some cases overthrow another, yet they will all conspire against Christ.

## Chapter 10

### *Showing Certain Other Differences That are Between Them in This Reluctancy of the Flesh Against the Spirit<sup>34</sup>*

#### *More Differences in Natural and Spiritual War With Sin*

##### *Differ in the Time*

Thirdly, they differ in the time of the combat. The natural combat oftentimes come as soon as reason can make a difference between good and bad; and it is that which may be in a very heathen, for Gentiles that have no law (Rom. 2:15) to go by, beside that which was written in their hearts, yet by that, were a law to themselves their consciences either excusing or accusing of them, now confidence according to that light that it has, is always at hand to contend against the works of sin, and that the fleshly appetite that is in us, howbeit, conscience may trouble us, yet it is commonly for greater sin, and not for lesser, as Pharaoh for his great cruelty confesses, *I have sinned*. And so we read did Nero, and others; but now for lesser them they easily pass over. Saint Paul cries out of the body of sin, that was within him: and David of the cutting off Saul's garment, his heart smote him for that, but in this case the natural conscience had little to say, because it knows little, therefore Saint Paul saith, *I had not known lust, except the law had said thou shalt not lust*; that is, his natural conscience did not discover it unto him, but it was given by a higher and a clearer light.

Our Savior Christ sheweth that while the strong man keeps the house, all that a man possesseth is in peace, but when a stronger than he comes then he begins the combat; so long as a man is in the state of nature, the prince of air his heart and has a quiet heart and has quiet possession: for although there may be a contention (as has been showed) among the passion and lusts, yet so as there is no hindrance to Satan by that at all, for the lesser footing he has in one lust, the stronger he is in another as it is among a company of gamesters, look what one loseth another wins and suppose that they should be all losers, yet the house where they game would be no gainer. So it is here, that as long as there is no other strife but amongst themselves, men are still as bad or worse than they were and Satan that keeps the house gains by them.

Again, suppose we some strange man should come into this gaming house, and should take away their money and burn the dice and cause the house to be pulled down and bind the strong man and lay him in prison; would not this breed hot blood and occasion strife? So it is in this case, for when the Spirit comes then it comes with such might he bears down all before it; and overthrows the strongholds of Satan, and every high thought that does exalt itself against God: by what as has been said, you may easily see how this natural combat differs from the spiritual, in regard of the time.

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<sup>34</sup> This chapter continues the explanation of the first element of "near" mortification: The actual combat against sin.

### *In the End<sup>35</sup>*

They differ in their ends that they have in their combat, there are three ends for which a man does undertake war: namely, peace, honor and terror: first, this war is undertaken for peace sake, both peace of conscience and peace with God, now howsoever a wicked man may seem to humble himself for his sin, and to make up his peace with God, yet it is but like those truces that are made in the wars for some short time, for some private reasons know to themselves so is it in this case. Ahab when he heard what God had threatened, he rent his clothes and put sackcloth, and went softly (1 Kings 21:29). Now here was a truce made between God and Ahab but no reconciliation, *Seest thou, (saith God) how Ahab humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days but in his son's days will I bring this evil upon his house.*

So that the judgment is not taken away but deferred: but now this spiritual warfare does aim at peace and ends in it, there is no affliction that is pleasant for the present, but grievous. Nevertheless it brings forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness (Heb. 12:11). Though this burden be heavy, yet it is the way to ease, and as after a toilsome labor comes the quietest rest. So after this war, the most settled peace as it was in that vision that Elijah saw (1 Kings 19:11). First came a strong wind that rent the mountains and brake the rocks in pieces, after this an earthquake, and after this a fire, and after all, a still voice; so it is with a Christian, that after many tumults and garboils in the soul, between these two enemies (the flesh and the Spirit) comes the still voice with joy and peace.

### *Honor as an End*

Another end is honor, a man that is good soldier under Christ's banner does endeavor to fight manfully that he may honor his cause, and his captain and good reason, the cause is just: for it is for the defense of Christ's right in our souls and we never had a better Captain than Christ is (Rev. 6:1) who rides on conquering and to conquer, who has led captivity captive, and a prince against whom there is no rising: but on the other side in the seeming war that there is to be found in wicked men, they chiefly aim at their own praise (Matt. 6:16) as they in their private fasting and works of mortification disfiguring their faces and were of sad countenances and all this is to be seen of men; but God knew their hearts to be far otherwise, or at the best, the chief end that a wicked man has in any trouble or contention against any sin it is himself; either for the preservation of himself or for his own advantage: and the reason is because as the man is so are his ends. If a man be flesh, then his ends cannot but smell of the flesh.

### *Terror and Fear as Ends*

The last end of this holy war is terror and fear; a man wars to that end that he may put the enemy into such a fear that he will be afraid to offend any more: So a man in this spiritual warfare, when the heart is once smitten, has true remorse for sin, he will be afraid to sin again,k

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<sup>35</sup> Natural and spiritual mortification differ in their ultimate purpose or aim. Ed.

as you examples of David and Peter, a hundred Bathshebas would not have allured David to have fallen into that sin again; the voice of a silly damsel made Saint Peter to deny his master, but after he felt the smart of it, and had repented of it he was not ashamed of his master, no not before princes and judges of the world.

One the other side, a man that is not sound at the heart, though his mind may be at present troubled and tremble in respect of some soul and great sin that stares him in the face and lies heavy upon his conscience yet does it work no change in him but after the tempest is over he returns with the dog to his vomit and with the sow to his walling in the mire, with as fresh and as a free an appetite as ever he did unto his sin (2 Peter. 2:22). Solomon compares such a man to one that lieth on the top of a mast in the midst of the sea, and saith they have smitten me, but I felt it not; they have beatn me, but I was not sick and therefore when I awake I will seek it again (Prov. 23:34-35).

### ***Differ in the Event***

They differ in their event: This war that is between the flesh and spirit always ends in a victorious conquest, over all the enemies of it, as say of truth so may I say of grace, great is the power of it and it will prevail (2 Cor. 12:9). Paul was not without this buffeting of Satan, and behold the grace of God was sufficient for him to enable him to bear out the quarrel against his enemy. And further he saith, *When I am weak then am I strong*; it is with a Christian in this case as it was with Rebecca when she had two twins strove in her womb, she comes to the Lord and saith, *Lord what I thus?* The Lord makes this answer, *two nations are in thy wombs, and to manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other; and the elder shall serve the younger* (Gen. 25:22-23). So it is in this case, here are two nations that strive within us, the old and the new man and they are contrary one to another, yet this is your comfort, the elder shall serve the younger, the new comer shall cast out the old inhabitant. Now who would not take that side on which he is sure to conquer? Then must you join with the Spirit against the flesh.

And though you may be foiled, they you shall never be conquered, for if God be with us who shall or can stand against us? He that is with us is greater than he that is against us, it is reported of Caesar and Anthony that they were wont often to wrestle together and though Anthony was the stronger man, yet Caesar always gave him the fall; the reason being demanded why it should be so the answer was made; because Caesar was guided by a better genius. So if you demand whence it is that such strong and potent lusts do all fall down before us and none of them able to stand. I answer it is because we have a better genius: greater is he that is with us than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4). On the other side, all the war of a wicked man, it never brings anything to pass. They are like the children of Ephraim that went out harnessed and carried bows yet turned again the day of battle (Ps. 78:9). What show soever there may be of goodness in us, yet if it be not in truth, it will not hold in the fiery trial.

## Chapter 11

### ***Showing Further the Difference of This Combat by the Weapons of it, Which is Cleared by Two Propositions<sup>36</sup>***

#### ***Fleshly and Physical Weapons***

The next thing wherein they differ in this conflict is in their weapons, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, so that look what difference there is between a carnal and a spiritual man, so much difference is there between a carnal and spiritual weapon: if you should see men go to wars and instead of warlike munitio [weapons] one should carry a shovel and another a mattock [a farming implement] and others should carry instruments for the ploughing and tillage of the ground, you would either suppose that the enemy were weak and contemptible or else account them but as fools or madmen that would undertake such a business being so ill [poorly] furnished for it. In like manner, may we account them as foolish and unwise that undertake a spiritual warfare with carnal weapons more especially against so potent an enemy. But [so] that you may the better understand the meaning of the Apostle; observe, first, that carnal weapons will not serve your turn [they won't help]. Secondly, that spiritual weapons will prevail, afore the former [spiritual weapons will be more successful than carnal weapons].

#### ***Sin Will Not be Killed by Killing the Body***

It is not the maceration [tearing, cutting] and mangling of the body that will do this, such as the priests of Baal of that that out of their blind devotion did lance [cut] themselves till the blood gushed out(1 Kings 18:28). Not unlike these were the Pharisees did disguise their faces (Matt. 6:16). There were also the *frates flagellates* [ Latin, brothers of whipping] among the Papists [Roman Catholics] that have far more blind devotion than true discretion, who think by this means not only to mortify their flesh but also to merit salvation; notwithstanding it was but an old custom taken from the ancient heathens; neither by going on pilgrimage and wearing sack-cloth on our loins or a profession of willful poverty: alas these are but like so many outward medicines which will be unable to cure an inward disease this is but, as it were, to apply a plaster [bandage] to the head when you grief lies at the heart. *Bodily exercise profits little, but godliness is profitable unto things;* and suppose that there were some virtue in some of these things to take down and tame the flesh, yet can we not suppose that they should have any efficacy on the soul being they are not spiritual weapons, neither does the Lord require them at our hands.

#### ***Outward Change Will Not Change Sin***

*Restraint will not kill sin*

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<sup>36</sup> This chapter continues the explanation of the first element of “near” mortification: combat.

It is not restraint from sin that will serve our turns. Such a restraint may arise from good education and living in good families or out of the goodness of natural temper which is not prone to rush into vice as other are; or for the better accomplishment of a man's own ends of profit or credit: now all this keeps but a man from the outward acts of sin, yet may he be as bad or worse within every day than others; as we see some men that are forbidden to work at their trades outwardly, yet will they work hard at them within still – so it is in this case that thought it be so, that he may not without some disadvantage suffer sin to break out, yet does he work within and follow the trade of sin there.

If that a pool do engender snakes and venomous creatures when it runs and the water issues from it, much more will it produce the like effects when it is damned up and stands: In like manner, if sin be but restrained and no more, lust breeds as fruitfully and works as hard within as ever it did.

### *Sin Breaks Out Worse When Merely Restrained*

Again, when sin breaks out, it is the more violent after a restraint, as you see with Absalom and Achitophel, for all their fair [attractive] pretenses that they made before of equity [reasonable behavior] and piety, yet when they brake out [fell out with one-another] how foul [evil, wicked, bad] their sin: as it is with such, as are cast into prison for stealing of some small trifles, after they have continued there sometime among the rest, they grow so skillful, that they come out tin times worse than they went in. In like manner, a man tha has nothing but this restraint, when he does break out is far worse than he was before: But true grace now does not only restrain from sin but does purge it out: thus, sin is not bridled, but broken to pieces; and not a restraint but a real change from sin to God.

### *Good Desires Must be Put Into Practice*

It is not enough to have good desires and good purposes of mortification unless they be put into practice. You know that muskets [rifles] and swords and pikes [spears] and other warlike instruments will not serve our turns [uses] if we let them hang up on a room unless we make use of them: in the day of battle so no, for will our good desires unless they be improved [put to use]: Some they have good purposes and desires, but they are slothful desires.

Balaam desires to die to die the death of the righteous, but he does not put his endeavor to it, many have good wishes and fair pretenses and make large promises of better obedience, and that is all. They may well be said to bear the sluggard's motto, which is this, he sits in his chair with his feet by the fire and hands in his pockets saying, O that this were to labor, so it, is with many that if good words and good wishes would do it, they would be as good Christians as the best, but now whence it comes to any difficulty they stay [remain, do not move/act].

### *Small Desire Does Not Create Great Change*

They are but childish desires, such as are very earnest after God, and very strong bent against lust, but it is for but a little while, till some bait be laid in the way, and they fall to sin again, as child does, sometimes you shall hear it complain and cry for the breast but give it but a key or a ball and it is quiet again: So when men seem to have some more than ordinary desire to this work, if that a key of some profit or a ball of some pleasure be cast in their way, they are straight [immediately] taken off from this work and all afresh to their lusts and to their sins again. Far are these from right purposes and sound resolutions which are begun upon deliberation. Like that King going to war (Luke 14:31) thinks whether he can be able with ten thousand to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand. And it is continued with undaunted resolutions, struggling and striving against sin and ends with unspeakable comfort unto the soul (Heb. 12:4) that we contend for an incorruptible crown that abides for us in the heavens.

### ***Outward Form is Not Enough***

It is not enough to have a form of godliness to have some appearance of this conflict, suppose we a man that is gotten [started in] into a way of piety and useth those ways and means that are appointed for that end, that sin may be mortified. Suppose it be hearing the word, prayer and fasting and abstinence from gross sin and the society of those that are righteous and good men, so the means are good, but he spoils them in the managing of them. As it was said of Amaziz, that he did that was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart (2 Chron. 25:2). So in this case the things that they do are good for the matter; but for the manner, it is done with such cold and superficial devotion that God says that he will spread dung on their face, even the dung of their solemn feasts. Yea, best things being abused become the worse and God does much abhor them, when they are not done in sincerity. Therefore it is that the prayer of the wicked is abominable, and all the splendid and fairest actions he does are but gilded and painted vices (Prov. 15:8, Is. 66:3, Jer. 6:20, Amos 5:21). That is the right circumcision which is the circumcision of the heart.

### **Spiritual Weapons will kill sin.**

The next proposition is that spiritual weapons will prevail unto this work of mortification (Eph. 6:13). It is a good exhortation that is given us, *put you on the whole armor of God: furnish the head, with the helmet of hope, have your breast guarded with the breastplate of righteousness, and your loins gird about with truth in your right hand the sword of the Spirit, and in your left the shield of faith, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace:* and as so many sentinels, you must add hereunto prayer in your spirit, watchfulness over your own hearts, and perseverance in so doing all your days.

I should be tedious if I should handle these at large and shew you the vigor and virtue of every one of these pieces of spiritual armor. I shall therefore speak so much of them as may concern our present purpose to purpose to put a difference between these and all carnal weapons.

### ***How Spiritual and Carnal Weapons Differ***

### *Source*

They differ in respect of their author, that is, it is called the armor of God. These weapons that were fashioned in Heaven. So as they are heavenly, both for the matter and for the form, that as David said of the sword of Goliath that there was none to it [the same as it]. So may I say of these: that there is none equal to them for the depressing of high thoughts and pulling down and demolishing the strongholds of sin.

Other weapons are such as are made by the flesh and Satan together and cannot be able to cut any sin. For if that the flesh and Satan should be divided against themselves, how should their kingdom stand? If that Satan do depart from a man, for some small time, it is but as a man that leases his house when he takes a journey, but yet retains his right and property in it still. That so at his pleasure (Matt. 12:48) he may return and then makes the later end of that man worse than the beginning was (Matt. 12:48).

### *Completeness*

They differ in respect of their completeness. For this armor of God is called the whole armor or complete armor of God. They say in the schools [universities] that evil may arise from the defect of any one cause, but to make an action truly good it must have all the causes entire. So it is in this case: to have your hearts truly mortified and this spirit warfare to prosper in your hands, you must have this complete armor.

Ahab was smitten with an armor between the joints of his harness (2 Kings 22:34). Now if Ahab was smitten in his complete harness on, much more may this cunning enemy smite and wound our souls, when we are not armed with every piece of our spiritual armor. He is as cunning as those left-handed Benjamites (Judges 20:16) that could fling stones at an hairs breadth and not miss. How did this fiery dart of Satan stick in Paul's flesh. How did his envenomed arrows waste the spirit of holy Job that had they not been fortified with this armor of proof [strength], they had not been able to stand on the other side.

Though an unregenerate man may pretend has a good hope in God, yet he wants [lacks] a good hope in God. An unregenerate man lacks faith as a ground. If he says he has a good faith, yet he wants the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; and so he is an ignorant man and knows not the things of God. Or if he have the Word of God, yet he wants the breast plate of righteousness, and the girdle of truth and sincerity. There is ever something that is wanting. And hence it is that they are not able to stand in the time of trial, but are made such vassals and led captive by him to the dishonor of God and their own just condemnation. Therefore, the exhortation that the Apostle uses shall be that of mine. *Finally, brothers, put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil days.*

### *An Armor on the Front*

It is the armor for the foreparts, to show that so long as we stand to it, and fight out the good fight we are safe enough, all shall prosper in our hands. But if we turn our backs on our enemy, then it is that we are wounded and overthrown.<sup>37</sup> It was the complaint of Joshua, O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns their back before their enemies (Josh. 7:8). But alas! What shall we say when a man that has this spiritual furniture on him, the fear and dread whereof were able to put an ordinary enemy to flight; the shield of faith being able to quench his fiery darts; and the sword of the Spirit to give him such a strong repulse as that he is not able to stand before it: Submit yourselves therefor to God and *resist the Devil* and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

It is reported of the crocodile that if so be that you flee from him, he will follow after you and tear you to pieces. But if you stand to him and fear him not, but contend with him, he will flee from you. Believe it brothers there is no way to this, to withstand and resist Satan and the flesh. For if you turn your backs on him, seeing you have no armor for behind, you will never be able to hold out long, but will become a prey unto him.

And therefore, if you be in a room at prayer or about any holy duty, as reading the Scripture, or any devout meditation, if there Satan shall present himself when we are best employed, fear him not, neither quit your place for fear of him. Let him not gain that advantage of you, neither give place to the Devil for greater is he that is with you then he that is against you. As it was with Israelites, so long as Moses held up his hands, Israel did prevail, but when he held them down the Amalecks did prevail. So while you seek the Lord and resist Satan, you shall prevail; but if you hang down your hands and turn your backs against him, the Lord will leave you and deliver you up into his hands.

Therefore, be you ever ready to resist Satan as he is tempting.

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<sup>37</sup> John Bunyan makes much the armor being only on the foreparts in *Pilgrim's Progress*. Ed.

## Chapter 12

### ***The Second Degree of Mortification, Which is More Near, is a Broken and Contrite Heart.***<sup>38</sup>

The second and more near degree of mortification is bleeding and contrite heart. It is called the sacrifice of God, or a broken spirit, *a broken and contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise* (Ps. 51:17). All sacrifices are included in this broken heart, the highest heavens and the lowest heart are two houses where the Lord will take up his special habitation (Ps. 57:16). The Lord says of the contrite heart, this is my house, here will I dwell to revive the spirit of the humble (Is. 66:2).

#### ***The Nature and Necessity of Contrition***

Here I shall observe two main things:

1. The nature of this contrition and brokenness of heart.
2. The necessity of it.

#### ***The Nature of Contrition***

First consider the nature of contrition and a broken heart for sin. This consists in four things.

#### ***Godly Sorrow***

A godly sorrow and true remorse for sin, a melting and tender heart, which of all hearts is the best. That when as we shall hear the Word, it will affect our hearts as the heart of Josiah was; or when we commit any sin, our heart, like that of David will smite us speedily; or when we see men dishonor god, or break his law, our eyes do break out with rivers of tears; or a least desire that our heads were wells of water and our eyes were fountains of tears (2 Sam. 24:5; Ps. 119:136; Jer. 9:1) Or when we want any good thing at the hands of God, that we find the good spirit of God helping our infirmities with sighs and groans, such as cannot be expressed (Rom. 8:26); crying *Abba* Father! And when we see our own deformities and the plague of our own hearts (1 Kings 8:38). We do bemoan ourselves as Ephriam did and smite our hearts and say, *Lord! Lo what have I done, woe is me, I am a man of polluted lips, and dwell among men of polluted lips* (Jer. 31:18). And indeed, as one has well observed, he that does not perceive the wounds that some have made in his soul.

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<sup>38</sup> This matter of repentance as a necessary element of the mortification of sin will be covered in chapters 12, 13 & 14. Chapter 15 will begin the discussion of the Holy Spirit's work. Just as Wolfal's book contains a great many similarities to Owen's *The Mortification of Sin*, so also, there are many similarities between Wolfal's book and other teaching on repentance, such as Thomas Watson's *The Doctrine of Repentance*.

*How great it must be.*

For the quantity of godly sorrow, how great it must be, for the softer the heart is made by sorrow the more fit it is to be cast into what fashion God would have it. As the furnace takes away the dross from the silver, so does godly sorrow work strange effect in the soul (2 Cor. 7:10-13). Now although we cannot set unto you how deep it should be, neither can we say as God does to the sea, hither you shall go and no further; yet we may set down some things in gentleness, which will be very necessary to know. As first it must be as great as worldly sorrow; yea, as the greatest worldly sorrow wherefore it is compared to the bitter lament on that is for an only child and for a [illegible word in text] first born, and like that hearty mourning that there was for Josiah in the Valley of Megiddo.

Now look how you have seen at any time a disconsolate father bewail the loss of his son, as David did for Absalom in that [unreadable] complaint of his, *O Absalom, my son! My son!* Or a distressed mother mourning like *Rachel for her children, because they were not*: Even such should be our sorrow for our sins, that our sin have so deeply offended God. Therefore it is prophesied that they shall be on the mountains, like doves of the valleys, everyone mourning for his iniquity.

Now whereas some poor soul may be troubled at this, and say, Alas, I never found any such affection in me for sin, as I have found for such a loss; therefore, we must distinguish between *dolor sensitivus* & *dolor apretiatius*; in respect of sense, the body and passions may be more troubled at an outward loss; because the object is more sensible and yet sorrow for sin may be greater in respect of the price and worth of it: Shallow waters often make the greatest noise, whereas the deep waters run the more still: so it is here, this sensitive sorrow makes more noise and yet this sorrow for sin goes near to the heart and makes<sup>39</sup> deeper impression. There is sometimes an aching tooth or some outward grief does vex and trouble a man more, than a burning fever or the consumption of the lungs and yet the later is far more dangerous than the former, because the disease ceases on the more noble [important] parts. So it is in this case, godly sorrow keeping within the bounds of reason, though it be more secret, yet it is more sound, and every way as great or greater than the other.

*Intensive and Extensive Measures*<sup>40</sup>

Consider of sorrow either intensive or extensive either in respect of the present force and intention of it, and so worldly sorrow may be greater; or else of respect of the constant duration, and extent of it; and so godly sorrow is greater; water that is dammed up in a pond, if you set open the watergate, it will run more for a short time, then the spring that feeds and fills it; so may

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<sup>39</sup> Original reads, "takes impression". Ed.

<sup>40</sup> Intensive refers to the strength, the depth of a thing. Extensive refers to the breadth, the extent.

worldly sorrow run after a present gush, and yet not comparable to the other in respect of continuance.

A pregnant example hereof we have in David, how did he bewail the immature and untimely death of son Absalom. *O Absalom my son, my son*, this was heavy for the present, and yet his sin that he had committed was heavier unto him in respect of continuance, and therefore he says, *that his sin was ever before him* (Ps. 51); he does not say of the loss of Absalom. When Moses had smitten the rock, the people drank of the rock, it followed them. It is thought by divines that this water followed them through the wilderness till they came where was plenty of water: So if our heart be truly smitten with the rod of God's Word, this sorrow will continue till we attain to the vision of peace.

### ***Sorrow According to Apprehension***

Our sorrow must be according to our apprehension, and the greater that we apprehend our sins to be, the greater should be the proportion of our sorrow for them. David had greatly sinned, and therefore, when he came to the sight of it, he did wash his bed and water his couch with tears and his moisture was turned into the drought of summer. And when Peter had greatly offended *he went out and wept bitterly*.

A great wound must have a large plaster [bandage] and a strong disease must have a strong potion [medicine]. So for as much as sorrow is the means to cure sin, and acceptable to God above all sacrifice; where sin has been great, the sorrow should be great also. Neither are lesser sins to be neglected, nor there is no sin so little, but if it be known, it must be repented of. For it be not grieved for, then it will grow, yea, and bring God's judgment on us too: Did not Eve bring all that misery on herself and us by eating of an apple.<sup>41</sup> And was not Lot's wife turned in a Pillar of Salt for a look back unto her city. And did not Uzzah lose his life by only touching the Ark of God: for too much diligence, as it were, therefore, make not any sin small, but bewail and leave them.

### ***What About Sins We do Not Rightly Apprehend?***

If it shall be said that there are many sin a man cannot know, or if they be known, yet preadventure we do not conceive of them as we ought: for answer hereunto:

First, if that ignorance be not affected ignorance, but after a sort invincible<sup>42</sup>, because using all good means to know it and yet it is not clear to him, in this case bewailing his known and unknown sins will suffice.

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<sup>41</sup> Adam's sin, not Eve, was the problem for all mankind. Ed.

<sup>42</sup> An invincible ignorance would be an ignorance which cannot be overcome. Ed.

Second, for the other I answer that we must know that how great soever we can conceive our sin to be so great they are and greater (Ps. 90:11); according to your fear, so is your wrath, that is, what fear you can conceive of God's displeasure for sin, so it is. That if your apprehension swell higher, you would still apprehend sin to be foul and ugly and odious in the sight of God: and therefore measure out your sorrow according to the higher proposition, rather than otherwise.<sup>43</sup>

If it be said how may this proportion be found out [discovered, understood]: to this I answer that then there is some proportion when as we are as deeply affected with sorrow for sin as we were raised and taken with the pleasure we had in sin, as it was said of seven years of plenty that was in the land of Egypt, that it should be forgotten by reason of the famine that was at the heels of it; so all the pleasure that a man has taken in sin is forgotten in regard of the grief and sorrow of heart that we feel. Nay, when he takes as much pleasure now in mortification of sin, and his mourning of sin as he took pleasure in sin itself; nay, he counts it all joy when he falls into trouble as these are, because that he knew after his sowing in tears he shall reap in joy. Whereas his former pleasures would have been the occasion of this future woe and misery, therefore that speech was very good of him that said it, that he was a more bold man that durst sleep with one sin (unrepented of) then with seven enemies.

### ***The Nature of True Sorrow***

The nature of true sorrow may be discerned in the qualities and properties of it: as,

#### ***True Sorrow Causes One to Seek for Help***

It is that makes men look about them, it makes them to seek for help as those that were pricked in their hearts, they said, *men and brethren what shall we do to be saved*; as it was with those lepers that lay at the of Samaria (2 Kings 7:3), when there was famine within and food without, but in the camp of the enemies, these men are now in a sad condition, if they stay there or turn into the city to die of the famine. If they betake themselves into the camp of the enemy, it may be they may live, it may be not; yet in a case of this nature, there is more wisdom to cast themselves upon a way wherein there is most hopes, and so they saved their lives by it, and are the messengers of good news to all the city.

It is just thus with a broken heart and a sorrowful spirit sometimes. If I turn back to my former condition, then I shall but add sin unto sin. If I stay here, and remain in that condition, then shall I certainly perish and therefore though as yet I know not whether God will have mercy to me, and hold out his golden scepter unto such a vile sinner as I am, yet will I go venture myself and if I perish I perish; believe it, if you seek thus you shall find; if you knock thus it shall be opened unto you; for if there be any hope in a merciless enemy, there is more hope in a merciful God: on the other side security is a certain sign of impenitency and of an unmortified

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<sup>43</sup> Sin is always worse than you think it to be. Ed.

nature; men are never nearer danger than when they are most secure; while they cry peace, and are settled on their lees<sup>44</sup>, dreading of no danger, then comes it upon them: but now that which makes a man mourn for sin puts him upon use of all good means to destroy this enemy and to favor no sin, though it be never so dear unto us, that we may follow the counsel fell of our Savior; that if our right hand due offend us we must cut it off and cast it from us; yea, and we must spare nothing that we may spare our souls.

### *All Other Sorrows Turn to this Sorrow*

This sorrow turns all other sorrow into its own nature as all the fresh rivers, though they run with forcible and strong currents into the sea, yet when they come there they are immediately turned into salt: so is it in this case, all other sorrows when they fall on a sanctified and a broken heart for sin, he can turn them all into this channel, and here they all change their qualities: suppose he find losses in his estate of some bad servant or bad debtor or any casualty by sea or land; the broken heart is not much troubled at the loss itself, nor at the persons that might occasion it as at his sin which might be ground of it.

### *Kiss the Rod*

And so it was with David, when Shemei cursed, behold he looked at himself and at his sin and humbled himself before God, because he know that the Lord had sent him (2 Sam. 16:10). So we see it was with Job, that when Satan's malice was made minister to the ful, yet so as Job looks hither & in conclusion says God give and God take. Whereas if he had looked lower, he might have said, God has given and the Devil has taken, but the humble spirit desires not to be troubled with what the Devil or man can do unto him; because he knows that they are but instruments and rods in God's hand to correct his children withal; therefore he falls down before God, and kisses his rod and call upon his name; and then the Lord cross by your children, or injuries by evil men, you may sit down and sorrow till you can weep no more; but now half of this, were it godly sorrow though your sins be as black as hell, yet God *will make them as white as snow*.

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<sup>44</sup> "Lees: (Heb. shemarim, from a word meaning to keep or preserve. It was applied to "lees" from the custom of allowing wine to stand on the lees that it might thereby be better preserved (Isa. 25:6). "Men settled on their lees" (Zeph. 1:12) are men "hardened or crusted." The image is derived from the crust formed at the bottom of wines long left undisturbed (Jer. 48:11). The effect of wealthy undisturbed ease on the ungodly is hardening. They become stupidly secure (comp. Ps. 55:19; Amos 6:1). To drink the lees (Ps. 75:8) denotes severe suffering" (M.G. Easton, Easton's Bible Dictionary (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996, c1897).).

### *Renewal by Repentance*

If a man be old, the skill of all the physicians can not make him young again. But a man that is truly humbled for sin, the Lord Christ redeems his life from death and renews his youth like the eagles; that as they report of the eagle, that when she grows old and cannot eat for the length of her bill, with much ado [a great deal of effort] she get it broken, and then falls to her meat as if she were young again.

### *There is Great Relief in Repentance*

So it is in this case when we have cast away all our abominations and our doings that were not good, though with much ado, then shall cease till we know that our sins are dissolved and purged out:

Alas! What comfort can a man receive so long as he remains a slave to his lust and is under the Prince of Darkness. But now sin is slain in us, and dead in us; then we do as David did when he child was dead, he then arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his apparel and came into the House of the Lord and worshiped; and then came into his own house and at bread (2 Sam. 12:20). When we find that this child that we have begotten by our sin is dead, we should do the like, then cheer up your hearts and worship God that has given you victory against it. It was comfortable news that was brought by the Angel unto Joseph, *Return into the Land Israel, for they are dead that sought the young child's life* (Matt. 2:20), so it will be a great stay [comfort, support] to our souls to hear that the body of death is dead within us, that sought to destroy our souls.

### ***Mourn Until God Gives Comfort***

We must mourn till he that has wounded us shall come and heal us, *Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he has torn, and he will heal us; he has smitten, and he will bind us up* (Hos. 6:1). It is an easy matter to wound, but not so easy to cure and heal again; it is the prerogative in this case that belongs chiefly to God. The flesh can vex us and Satan can tear and trouble us and wound us, but none of these can cure us again; but now God can as well heal as wound. Here is one thing further to be observed, that the prophet does not say that sin or Satan has wounded us, and God will heal us; but he has wounded us, and he will heal us and bind us up; for a man may have these wounds by sin and Satan, and yet no true cure, the cure that these physicians can give us are of no value: is either to cast a man into a deep or rather a dead sleep of security and hardness of heart, or to suffer him to fall into despair, and hasten his own untimely death as Judas and [illegible] did; but where God once by his spirit smites the heart with true remorse for sin, then he is moved by the same spirit to seek unto God for the cure of that wound as it was with Elisha that after Elijah had put his mantle upon him, he presently comes after him (1 Kings 19:19). So whereas the Lord shall be pleased to work in us a true sight of our misery, he never does it without some hoep of mercy, that when we feel our burden we might likewise come unto him for ease and comfort. These are those comfortable [comforting] speeches, *that a*

*father pitieth his own children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him (Ps. 103:13); and that promise he will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax (Matt.12:20); and taht exhortation come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will ease you (Matt. 11:28).*

## Chapter 13:

### *Shows the Other Properties of Contrition, viz., Shame, Indignation, and Revenge<sup>45</sup>*

#### *Shame as Element of True Contrition*

The next thing in contrition is to be ashamed of our sins and to loath them; for the more the heart is broken for sin, the more it is ashamed for it; as when *Job* saw himself in his color, then he did abhor himself in dust and ashes (Job 42:6); and the prophet shows that there should come a time when the Lord would smite the hearts of men, *that they should remember their own evil way and their doings that were not good and should loath themselves in own sight for their iniquities and for all their abominations* (Ezk. 36:31). And hence is that of the Apostle *what profit have you in those things whereof ye are now ashamed* (Rom. 6:21). It is not the having of sin that brings shame, but the sense of it; for when as we shall have it clear unto our understand how bad a companion it is, and how much harm it has done us, and how great [a] danger it has drawn us into, it makes us ashamed.

#### *The Cause of Shame*

What will make a man ashamed sooner than the apprehension and sight of his own nakedness? So soon as Adam saw his nakedness he even out of shame went and hid himself in the Garden among the bushes this was not so much because of the nakedness of his body, for so he was before but [except for] his sin; not for the want of apparel; as for the want of righteousness, that him ashamed.

Again, when a man considers that he is not only naked, but that sin has defiled him and made him a most defiled and most monstrous creature: this make him the more astonished at God's great patience, that suffers [permits] to live and to abhor himself as one of the most wretched and miserable men under heaven.

#### *Sin Makes One Contemptible*

When we consider the contempt that sin brings on us, that is not only a burden to us, but it makes us oftentimes odious to the sight of men and always contemptible [in] the sight of God: Thence it was that the prophet setting out of the vileness of our natural condition, sets it out by such an one as no eye pities, none looked with compassion on him, when he lay polluted [defiled, covered in] his blood, he was then cast out into the open field to the loathing of his person. So it is with every man by nature, when he comes to see into what contempt and disgrace he has brought himself both with God and man, will he not be ashamed? Surely if there be any spark of grace, he will abhor himself in dust and ashes and labor to buy of Christ white raiment [clothing],

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<sup>45</sup> This chapter continues the discussion of the second element of “near” mortification: Repentance.

that the shame of his nakedness may not appear (Rev. 3:18). If any shall say, that men may be ashamed of their sin and yet the heart not broken; to which we answer, that there is a large difference between them.

### ***The Difference Between Shame and a Broken Heart: The Sight of God***

They differ in their objects, a man whose heart is truly sensible of that disgrace that lies upon him from God; this is that makes him ashamed. Miriam, when she was smitten with leprosy and Moses prayed unto the Lord that he would heal her, the Lord answered Moses, saying, if her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed (Nu. 22:14)? So I say, that when God pours contempt on a man unto whom he has been gracious and favorable, so as he casts out his petition, and will not hear nor answer them. He casts him into darkness and sets his sin in order before him and suffers him to lie in the deep (Is. 6:5); as Jonah among the weeds: this makes a gracious man greatly ashamed:

But now the shame that a wicked man has, it is most of all in respect of men (Job 22:13). They think they shall escape the reproach from God well enough, were it so they could but escape those disgraces and disparagements that do fall on them from men and say that heaven is so high that God cannot hear: can he judge through the dark clouds? Thence it was Saul desired to be honored among the people, though otherwise he would have gloried in his shame (1 Sam. 13:30).

In one word, where the shame of men does not bridle us from sin more than the fear of God, it is clear to me, that we prefer our credit above our conscience. I read of Paphnutius, a learned and pious bishop at the Council of Nice, that being allured by a harlot to incontinency; she brings him into a very dark room. He, looking sadly about him, said, I am afraid that somebody sees, never doubt, says he, none but only God sees us here; but (says she) if God does see us, how dare we do that in the sight of God that we dare not do in the sight of men?

### ***The Difference Between Shame and a Broken Heart: Duration***

They differ in their continuance, for the longer that a wicked man lives, the harder his heart grows, and the less the sin and shame he has of his sins. Hazael could not think that ever he should prove so bad and so bold a sinner as was prophesied of him, no man is the worst at first: but grows to it by degrees *Domitius Nero* for the first five years of his reign; he was so fair [attractive] and so favorable, as it was called *Neronius Quinquennium* [five years of Nero]. But after he broke forth into such foul and bloody sin as made him both hateful to God and man. But now, on the other side, the more is his sense and sorrow for sins and the more he is ashamed of them: there ever the burden of them is the more heavy and the memory is more grievous unto him, yea, the sins of his youth: you write bitter things against me and make me to possess the sins of my youth.

Briefly, that I am end this point, if you can step over those sins, now without remorse or shame that before time would have made you ashamed. You may well suspect yourselves to be let loose to hardness of your own heart, and given over to reprobate sense; but if on the contrary you feel a stronger distaste of sin, so as is not committed without grief, nor thought upon without blushing, so as it is not committed without grief nor thought upon without blushing, if you be thus ashamed of your sins God will not be ashamed of you at the last day.

### ***The Difference Between Shame and a Broken Heart: Operation***

They differ in these operations and manner of working for though a wicked man may, when he has sinned and he is under guilt and punishment of some heinous offense, sometime be humbled for it and blush at the remembrance of it; yet it works no change in him, it does not alter him to any purpose. It may do, peradventure, as the angel unto Balaam for the time, turn him aside or stop him a little while, but not long; he goes on still, till he perishes by the wages of iniquity and be taken in the cords of his own sins. On the other side, he that is truly bashful for his sin, he has taken such a distaste against them, as that neither the flattering baits of the flesh nor the golden flowers of the mammon of iniquity, and persuade with him to take pleasure in sin anymore; yea this hold bashfulness is like the flaming sword that kept the gate of Paradise that fallen man could not make any entry, for when we are ashamed of our sin it wards [guards] the gates of our hearts, and keeps us in that we rush not into sin again; for when God smites the conscience and reproves it savingly for its sins; it makes Job's reply, *Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee: I will lay my hand upon my mouth, once have I spoken, but I will not answer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further* (Job 40:4-5).

### ***Third Property of a Broken Heart: Indignation***

Now come we to the third property of a broken and bleeding: that is, where there is a hearty and holy indignation against sin (2 Cor. 7:11). The Apostle speaking of godly sorrow: Lo, says he, what indignation has it wrought: there is a twofold indignation.

#### ***Sudden Anger***

The former is a sudden anger, that is, when men are soon angry and soon pleased: as it was David, what a pelting chase he was in against Nabal, what big words [boastful words] does he break into while he is going down the hill, how does he upbraid his churlish behavior; and tells what havoc he will make among them [Nabal's household] before the next morning. Yet by & by, when Abigail meets him with a small gift, with a few soft words, she turns away his wrath and all is well again. So it is in this case, do you not see many a man that when sin galls him, O how bitter and boisterous he is against his lust. But now when as this corrupt heart of ours shall but deck herself with some fair and plausible excuse and bring some present in her hand of gain or pleasure, the matter is taken up and the contention is at an end, and the lust and he are grown good friends.

### ***Permanent Anger***

But now there is another indignation that is called permanent anger, that does continue and remains with a man. So as it is with some men, that when they are once out and angry with a man they are never pleased again. This kind is no way good but [except] against sin, and then it is exceeding good. We are charged not to let the sun go down upon our wrath; neither to give place to the devil (Eph. 4:26), but in this case we must suffer [permit] the sun to go down upon this indignation against this body of sin, or else we give place to the devil.

When Elisha bid Joash King of Israel to smite the ground with his arrows, the text says he smote the ground thrice and stayed, which if he had done five or six times he had utterly consumed his enemies. It is so in this case, some men will be angry sometimes with their sins: it may be twice or thrice in their lives, but if they would continue their indignation and smite on, they would at last utterly confound their sin and subdue them. The way to avoid the anger of God is to be angry with ourselves, for if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged of God at the last and great day, this is our comfort that we are angry with our lust: we can never be angry too much, you cannot hate them more than they deserve: but as the Israelites were never to make peace with Amaleck, so no more must we with our sins.

### ***Fourth Property of a Broken Heart: Revenge***

The last property of a broken and bleeding heart is a holy revenge; now a revenge is a dealing in like manner with sin, as it has dealt with us. For as much as lusts are those enemies which war against our souls, we must be courageous to war against them, and then do we this great work.

### ***By Abstaining From Things Which Lead to Sin***

When we do abstain from the use of those things that are in themselves lawful, when we have unlawfully abused them. As suppose we a man that has been an immoderate drinker of wine, whereby he has not only abused the creature of God, but made himself for the time of a reasonable man like unto a reasonable beast.<sup>46</sup> Or suppose we another, that has been given to immoderate gaming, as hunting, hawking [using hawks to hunt], bowling and has made these which were for his recreation to be come, as it were, his vocation. In such a case as this, if it might not tend to the too much loss of his health, or danger of his life, it were good for a man to abstain altogether from them, at least for some time as a revenge of his former abuse of them.

Again, if that these or the like immoderate recreations have kept us from the service of God, either in the public assembly or in our private closets, it should be our care and endeavor to recompense our slothfulness with double diligence.

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<sup>46</sup> By becoming drunk, a once reasonable man becomes no better than an animal which has no reason, Ed.

A man that would avenge himself of his lusts, he must pursue them, as the avenger of blood did the manslayer, or malefactor, that unless he was gotten into the city of refuge, he was surely slain. So must we do, hunt them out, let them not rest in any corner of our hearts, for if sin may but find any little resting place in our souls, it will not out, and as long as sin rests in us, Christ will not rest. Therefore, you must not cease till you have driven it out of your bounds. It was a good pitty [saying]: behold there is an enemy within you, that does endeavor to slay Christ. Therefore, says he, neither father nor mother nor kinsman should prevail with out to keep in our sins, but we should shake off all and follow Christ – though it be to the loss of all things else, for this kind of cruelty is the height & top of true piety.

*The righteous shall rejoice, when he sees the vengeance; and wash his feet in the blood of the wicked., Psalm 58:10.* And how great joy will that be when as a Christian shall see the revenge upon his sins, that they that were his enemies are fallen before him: It is hard unto flesh and blood to be thus cruel, especially against himself, as to turn his mirth into mourning; his hours of recreation into times of devotion: to beat down his body, by fasting; and to afflict his souls with shame and sorrow.

This I say is difficult, but yet, if you would overcome nature, you must become in this thing unnatural, that they should leave their calves and do thus; yet they did it because it was God's work. So I may say, that though they may seem unnatural, and a kind of cruelty, yet we must set upon it because it is God's work; happy is that man that takes these brats [derogatory term for children] of Babylon & dash their heads against the stones (Ps. 137:9) for in not pitying them, he pities his [own] soul.

## CHAPTER 14

### *Showing the Great Necessity of Contrition, Which is Fourfold<sup>47</sup>*

#### *First: The Necessity of a Broken Heart*

The second thing is the necessity of a broken heart. In point of mortification, there is *necessitas precepti* [a necessary precept] of God's command: he has commanded us to do this duty, he has commanded us to mourn. They should weep as a Virgin girded with sackcloth, for the husband of her youth, and so turn to the Lord (Joel 1:8): Where there is the greatest love, there should be the greatest sorrow. Now the first love is the greatest love, and therefore the first loss does require the greatest sorrow.

#### *Sorrow Shows the Grievous Nature of our Sin*

What does show unto us that nothing should be more grievous to us than our sins, seeing God has commanded it as a things necessary to this work, why should we not do it? Again, we are enjoined shame, thence it was in the Law, that when they had transgressed the commandments of the Lord, they used to put sackcloth on their loins and pour ashes on their heads, being tokens of shame and sorrow (Neh. 9:1; Jer 48:37). Again, we are commanded to be sore [extremely] displeased with our sin. David's heart was hot within him (Ps. 39:3). And the heart of Josiah was melted at the abomination of those times and the great transgression against God's law. This is that the Lord does require.

#### *A Holy Revenge*

Lastly, that there should be a holy revenge. I suppose that vow of the Nazarites: that he should abstain from wines and from the husks of grapes, was chiefly ordained as holy revenge upon the occasion of the abuse of the good creature of God. Now whatsoever God command us, that is necessary; but you see th God has commanded us to labor for a contrite and bleeding heart. Therefore it is necessary as the servant of Naaman the Syrian said unto him, *If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it, how much more then, when he saith to thee, wash and be clean* (2 Kings 5:13).

#### *A Willingness to Sorrow*

So say I, if God should command you some great thing, for the mortification of your sin and the salvation of your souls [you would do it]. Suppose it were to go barefoot to Jerusalem or to bestow all your good on the poor, or give the first born of your body for the sin of your soul; would you not do it, how much rather then, when he says only this, that a broken heart and a contrite heart shall stand instead of all these (Ps. 51:17).

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<sup>47</sup> This chapter continues the second element of "near" mortification: Repentance.

### ***Second: Necessity of the Means***

There is *necessitas medii* [necessity of means] . It is a special means that this body of sin may be subdued (2 Cor. 7:11). For it was with water, when it overflows the ground, it drives out moles and worms and other such creatures as do insert and annoy the ground and eat up the roots of plants fit to become food for man: so it is with true contrition, it does so overflow the heart with godly sorrow, as that it drives out these troublesome inhabitants that do annoy our spirits and would spoil those good beginnings of grace in us. Therefore put we ourselves on the means and stand not like the hand that is set up to guide us the way, and yet moves not itself. But if we know these things blessed are we if we do the.

If you say that to do thus is troublesome to flesh and blood; I answer, it may be so, but as we say that, sometimes the things that are not the most toothsome [delicious, desirable] are very wholesome and good. So howsoever they may be some trouble, yet so long as this trouble does free us from a greater trouble, all is well. It is better to mourn here where we have comfort, than to mourn and burn in hell, where we can neither have ease nor remedy. Again, our comfort will recompense our trouble; for every hour of grief shall be recompensed with thousands of years of joy and consolation.

When a man has been ten thousand years in heaven and then shall look back and consider what a short time of sorrow it was that he endured, and withal [yet, nevertheless] how many millions of years are behind which can ever expire. I conceive it will not repent him [cause him to repent], nor grieve him, that he has mourned (1 Cor. 9).

In one word, this necessity is confirmed by the practice of such, as are gone to heave already; as Saint Paul that did struggle with his corruption beat down his body; and Saint Peter and David and the rest. And it is prophesied of the people of God, that they should go weeping to seek the Lord and should ask the way to Sion [Zion] with their faces thitherward saying, come let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. Comfort yourselves therefor in the use of good means for your passage through the Valley of Baca, the Valley of Mourning, is to meet the Lord (Ps. 84:6-7).

### ***Third: Necessity That all Our Actions Come From a Broken Heart***

It is necessary in respect of all our actions that they may be right [<sup>48</sup>]that they should come from such a heart as hates sin. *For if I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer* (Ps. 66:18). Now [a] man is said to regard wickedness when the parting with it is grievous to him; as it was when *Abraham* was bidden by Sarah to cast our Ishmael, the matter was very grievous unto him, because he did regard and love him: so it is when we respect and love our sins, we will be loath to part with them and then know that what action soever you do, you cannot please God. The reason is, because God he judges of a man's action according to his

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<sup>48</sup> The text, at this point repeats the phrase, "It is necessary", Ed.

heart, which if that be unfound, then will all the action be no better. There is the complaint made by the prophet: “And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it; for with lustful talk in their mouths they act; their heart is set on their gain” (Ezekiel 33:31).

While men deal thus with God and behave themselves no better in his service, they may not unfitly be compared to the water-man [a man operating a small boat on a river] that while he rows one way, he looks another: *Wash your hands therefore, ye sinner, and cleanse your heart, ye double minded men* (James 4:8). Wash your hands by reformation (and your hearts by true contrition); otherwise you are but *dipyschos*, double-minded (Matt. 12:33).

Therefore, make the tree good and the fruit be good; therefore now if your heart be good, so will your actions be: *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks* (Matt. 12:33); the hand works, the ears harkens and the whole man moves. Therefore there must be great need of contrition to the end (Is. 5:7 & 15).

#### ***Fourth: A Broken Heart Makes Way for Christ***

There is a necessity of it this regard, as much as it makes way for Christ to dwell in our hearts. When our blessed Savior tells his disciples whither [wherever] they should go and where he would eat the Passover: *you shall find (says he) an upper room furnished and prepared there make ready for us* (Luke 22:12). So it is also in this case, into what heart Christ intends to come and to make it his chamber of preference (Eph. 3:17). It must be prepared for him by true humility and contrition: *Wash you make you clean* (Is. 1:16-18); and *then come* says God, *let us reason together*, till then you are not fit to draw near unto God.

When the people of Israel had committed the great sin in the making of a Calf, the Lord tells them, that so long as they kept their ornaments on them, it was in vain to make suit [petition, as in a lawsuit] unto him [Ex. 33]. Put off, therefore, says he, your ornaments, that I may know what to do unto you: So must we, if we expect Christ to come into our hearts, put off the old man which is corrupt by deceitful lusts. So long as lust rules and reigns in the heart, so long Christ is kept out. But now when by true contrition we cast away our transgressions and banish our old inhabitants, then Christ will enter and dwell there.<sup>49</sup> But first he will cast out buyers and sellers, and money changers, they shall not nest and rest themselves in his Temple. He will cast out and overcome the world and strong corruption and make us abhor and avenge our sin. They he will say, this is my house, here will I dwell and I will establish it on such a foundation as the gates of hell cannot prevail against [it].

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<sup>49</sup>If a man does not mourn for sin such as to drive them out, can we say that Christ has come to his heart? Ed.

## Chapter 15

### *The Third More Near Degree of Mortification in the Killing of Sin*

#### **Third Near Degree of Mortification: Slaying Sin**

The last degree of mortification is slaying of sin, the execution of it; whereby we are said to be crucified unto the world and the world unto us (Gal. 6:14). That is, I am not so low and vile the esteem of the world; but the world is as base and contemptible to me. The same apostle shows that the end why Christ was crucified was that the body of might be destroyed.

#### *What Kind of Death the Death to Sin Is*

##### *A Lingered Death*

This destruction and death of sin is a lingering death: a man dies by degrees. As the death of the cross was, they hung a long while before they died.<sup>50</sup> And the more strength, the longer: So the stronger that sin is, the longer it will be a-dying; as it is with a man that does beleaguer a strong fort, and where stout and valiant men are, they will suffer much penury and hardship and hardly be brought to yield until the last man. So is it in such a case, here is such a stronghold of carnal reasons and corrupt lusts set up within us and be fortified by Satan and strong and desperate resolutions. That it will be a long time before we can get the upper hand and the victory over them.

And when we have gotten the victory, yet still they will trouble and disquiet our peace. As the Lord would not drive out all those nations from among the people of Israel, but they were as thorns in their eyes and scourged in their sides and were not utterly cast out (Josh. 23:13). So may I say that they lusts they will be so unto us. All that we can do will be this, not to suffer them to reign and to weaken their strength by degrees.

##### *A Painful Death*

It is a painful death to mortify and kill sin, it cannot be done without much pain. Hence, it is called circumcision: *Circumcise yourselves unto the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts* (Jer. 4:4). That this was sore and painful thing may appear in the soreness of the men of Shechem the third day (Gen. 34:25). And by that speech of Zipporah unto Moses, *a bloody husband thou are*, because of the circumcision (Ex. 4:26). And indeed, when we consider what prayers, what tears, what revenge, and what wrestling it has or may cost you.

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<sup>50</sup> John Owen uses this precise image to explain the nature of mortification in chapter 6 of *The Mortification of Sin*.

You will say that there is need of much faith to defense yourself, much in God's word to offend [fight against] your enemy, and much patience that in the midst of this conflict that you may not break out against God into impatient speeches. The heart (in this case) knows his own bitterness (Prov. 14:10); no man else can tell it, nor is able to express it. What fightings and fears within and what troubles without [outside of the person]; as that the poor soul finds such waves and storms in his conscience that he is like Noah's dove [which] knows not where to rest his soul.

As you may see in the case of Job and Paul and many times strong assaults and conflicts, the enemy when he is dying is often the most desperate; and sometime good men apt to be surprised with spiritual pride and to think that either he is so good he ought or so strong he fears not to be tempted. In such a case he has need of a temptation that he may better know himself and seek out unto Christ, as they when they were tossed with the waves (say), *Help master, or else we perish!* (Matt. 8:26).

#### *Diminished – not Absent – Power*

Though sin cannot be utterly subdued, yet may it be greatly diminished; and the power of it enervated and abated. Though the Canaanites were not utterly subdued, yet were they very low brought. So sin may by this work of mortification be brought very low, as it was with the widow of Zarephta, her store was so wated that she had no more but a handful of meal in a barrel and little oil in a cruise, which she was about to dress for her self and her son, and then to eat it and after die (1 Kings 17:8-16). Now it is a great comfort unto a man when a man can attain to this.

#### *What Diminished Power Means in Practice*

That he can keep his heart that sin do not at any time break out into any gross act. It is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth, that they *walked in all the commandments of God without rebuke* (Luke 1:6). That is, though they were not without their infirmities; yet were they without rebuke, in respect of any crime or gross sin. Yet here is a large difference between such as do only restrain and keep in sin, for some by end, and such as these to who sin is in some measure mortified even as much as there is between beating a lion and the changing of his nature.

#### *A Change in Love and Desire*

Thence it is that this work makes us of lions to become as meek as lambs, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). Though a wicked man may curb and keep in sin, yet can he not kill and destroy sin. And the reason is this, because he wants [lacks] special and spiritual means.<sup>51</sup> Sins will not be driven out with great words, nor

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<sup>51</sup> This particular understanding of the nature of human change creates an interesting dynamic when the Christian considers the rightful understanding of modern psychologies. Ed.

by spreading sackcloth and ashes under you (Is. 58:6); nor hanging down your heads like a bullrush for a day, but there must be us the love of God which will make us depart from iniquity.

*This is a Great Comfort*

It is a great comfort when sin is so overpowered as it does not divert us from duty. I do not say distract us in the performance of them, for there is no man without them, for when we are the best employed about our devotions: as reading, hearing, praying, or meditation. Then is the adversary most busy to disquiet our peace and to hinder us in our work. When Joshua, the High Priest, was standing before the Angel of the Lord, there Satan stood at his right hand (Zech. 3:1).

Yet you may have good comfort in this, when you go on in your work as they that built the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 4:18): though they were much distracted and disquieted by their enemies; yet did they hold on their work though it was with their swords by their sides. So a good Christian, albeit he has many distractions, yet he goes on in duty and will not be diverted from it, as it was with David when Michal his wife spake against him for this dancing before the Ark of God, he made his reply, *that if that were vile, he would yet be more vile* (2 Sam. 6:20-23).

So it is with a mortified man: that though there were never so many impediments and stumbling blocks laid in his way of the loss and discredit he shall sustain; yet he looks more at the praise of God than of men and knows that what is highly pleasing in the sight of men is displeasing in the sight of God (Luke 16:15), and therefore takes up Saint Paul's resolution when he would not go up to Jerusalem in regard of present danger that they did foresee, howbeit [however it may be] Saint Paul being bound in the Spirit for the work of the Lord asks them what they mean to break his heart, seeing was ready not only to be bound at Jerusalem but to die there for the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts. 21:13). So is it with him that is truly humbled, that nothing diverted him from the duty.

*A Great Comfort*

It is a great comfort unto a Christian when he has so conquered and overpowered his corruptions and that they take not away his joy and consolation that he has in Christ, neither can Satan can take such advantage by them to despoil us of our crowns. Then it is that Saint Paul says he will glory in his infirmities; that though he might glory in those heavenly visions that he had, yet he would rather glory in them (2 Cor. 12:5). For though in a large sense, every sin is called an infirmity, because it disables a man from the performance of duty. But in a strict sense, no man can be said to have infirmities, unless that sin is some measure be mortified; for in an unmortified man sin is alive and in his full strength, and his soul is void of grace.

But now in a man that is truly mortified, there grace receives strength and sin is wounded. And so such a man is the proper subject of infirmities; now when the Apostle says he do rejoice in his infirmities, he does not rejoice in his infirmities as they are sins, but as they are infirmities

(Matt. 10). That is as sin was deforced [made to lose force] and diminished in him, and therein he had cause of joy. And we also when we find it so in us, if the disciples rejoiced that the devils were subdued by them. Much more may we that the body is sin is destroyed and that which is worse than the Devil is subdued by us, *count it all joy when yee fall into divers temptations* (James 1:2-3), knowing that the trial of our faith works patience and patience makes perfect and entire: We are but in this case as gold that is put into the furnace, that comes out more pure and are made by that means vessels of honor, fit for the use of our great Master, our Lord, and Savior Christ.

## Chapter 16

### *Certain Signs of a Dying Man*<sup>52</sup>

I comes now to show unto you certain signs of a dying man, whereby you may see whether that you be in such a case, yea or no. It would be in vain to show sign of a dead man, for as much as there is no perfect of death of sin in our souls; as there is no perfect of grace, so neither is there (as we have formerly showed) perfect of mortification. Only as has been showed we are daily a-dying but not fully dead.

#### *First Sign: No Appetite*

A man is said to be a dying man when his stomach fails; when he has no appetite to [for] his food. When [we] have no stomach to sin, no appetite after it; when we feel no such sweetness in it as we have done, when we esteem the profits and pleasures of sin as an empty vessels; in one word, when all of them are bitter unto us and tasteless in respect of what they have been to us before time: as old Barzillai said to David, *can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men ... Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again* (2 Sam. 19:35-37).

Just thus it is when a man feels his affection off from his sin, that he can neither relish their sweetness nor be allured with their pleasant songs, to be drawn back unto them: again, it is a good evidence that sin is a-dying and declining in him. I deny not but time may wear out our appetite unto some sin as an old man, that has been given in his youth to lust and voluptuousness [sexual immorality], may leave them, but yet he lives still in some other sin which is equivalent and as dangerous to his soul.<sup>53</sup> Yea, and when his natural appetite is taken away, yet his sinful appetite may remain, so that when a man wants strength to sin, yet may he have a mind to sin, and with that he were young again that he might sin. Whereas, were sin mortified, these sinful affections would die sooner than our natural [life].

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<sup>52</sup> Continuance of the third element of “near” mortification: the killing of sin. Ed.

<sup>53</sup> Owen, *Mortification*, Chapter Five:

A sin is not mortified when it is only diverted. . . . Men in age do not usually persist in the pursuit of youthful lusts, although they have never mortified any one of them. And the same is the case of bartering of lusts, and leaving to serve one that a man may serve another. He that changes pride for worldliness, sensuality for Pharisaism, vanity in himself to the contempt of others, let him not think that he hath mortified the sin that he seems to have left. He hath changed his master, but is a servant still.

### ***Second Sign: Burden to Himself***

A man is then a-dying man when he is a burden to himself; when he is not able to bear his own weight; when you see a man hardly able to go on his legs, you say that unless he do recover again he is not like to continue long. So say I in regard of sin, then when you see a man that feels and finds sin to be such a burden; as he is not able to bear, but groans under the burden of it. That assuredly then sin is a-dying.

Well may sin make us groan and buckle under it, when it makes the whole creation groan. Nay, that which is so heavy a burden, as the Lord that made heaven and earth and bear them up his own power and never complains of the burden of them, complains of this *behold I am pressed down under you, as a cart as pressed that is full of sheaves* (Amos 2:13). You therefore that feel your sins to be no burden, but can carry your sin away with you as easily as Sampson carried the gates of Gaza upon his shoulders (Judges 16:3). It is an argument that you are Sampson like in your sin, sin does abide in you in its full strength, if some man shall say, I hope I shall do well then for I find sin a heavy burden.

### ***Not All Groaning is Groaning for Sin***

But I would ask him this question then, whether do you find sin a burden in regard of itself or in regard of some circumstance that does depend upon it. As man the wrath of God of the shame and disgrace that you may have among men by it: If that sin be the burden, then your case is good; if not, then may you suspect yourselves to be unfounded; as suppose a man that has a certain quantity of sponge on his back, which carries away lightly away, but now this man travels all afore a rainy day which does so fill the sponge with water, that his burden that was light before, now becomes intolerable.

So it is in this case, it is not the weight of sin that troubles them, they carry it roundly away; but now that which troubles them is those showers of wrath from heaven and that shame and contempt that they receive from men, that makes them to cry out as Cain did, *my punishment is greater than I can bear*. When as the penalty that is annexed unto sin, were the sin removed off to a mortified man it would see light and little.

### ***Third Sign: Sin Languishes and Grace Prevails***

A man may then be said to be a dying man when as his disease prevails upon him, so as he has less power to resist it, every day than other: So likewise when that sin decays and does languish away in us, and grace does so prevail and get the upper hand; as that corruption and sin is not able to stand against it, as it has done; the understanding is so far convinced by the clear light that shines into it, that it is not able to stand nor shift any longer, but it is beaten off from all those false reasonings secret turnings, and cunning equivocations, so as a man dares not any longer rest on it; the will is also fairly persuaded, and will resist the Holy Ghost no longer, but yields up the whole unto Christ and says, *Lord not my will, but they will be done* (Prov. 3:5).

Hence comes a general mortification of the affections and lusts; by affections understand those inordinate affections which bear sway in the hearts of men (Gal. 5:24); as immoderate anger, grief, also pride, unnatural affections. And by lusts all insatiable desires after the things of this life, they are now all crucified, so as they will yield no more blind obedience, either to sin or Satan, so as grace has drawn the strength of the soul unto it, and cuts off that wherein the great strength of corruption lay.

It is reported Cyrus finding the City of Babylon impregnable, and almost impossible to be taken by land, by reason of a great wall that did compass it on the one side, and finding the river Euphrates to hem it in on the other side, caused his soldiers to cut the river into many channels and to divert it another way, and so surprised the city, and subdued it. Just thus it is when we shall divert those noble faculties of the soul another way; namely from taking part with sin, to take part with God, it will not then be hard to mortify and subdue our corruptions; if it shall be said then how comes it to pass then that men after that they be grown Christians that they fall into such sins: I answer it is not because sin is stronger but either by reason of their slothfulness or spiritual pride, or else by violence of something which may befall them while they resting careless and secure are surprised and overtaken which howsoever there be neither want of strength, nor weakness of grace.

***Yet for want of watchfulness this may befall a good man***, as it did David and Peter; yet let me add this one thing, that is that this in the event turns to a greater good, and for the time to come to make us more careful to gird our armor about us, and more watchful that we sin no more; the burnt child (as it is in the proverb) dreads the fire<sup>54</sup>: so will a Christian that has been once scorched by such a temptation.

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<sup>54</sup> “The burnt child dreads the fire”, i.e., experience is a powerful teacher. Ed. See, Dwight Edwards Martin, *The Antiquity of Proverbs* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1922) 47. Ed.

## Chapter XVIII

### *Showing the Third, [P]articular That is the Means Whereby This Work is Done and That is by the Spirit<sup>55</sup>*

Come we now to the third particular, and that is the means whereby this great work of mortification, and its effect and brought to pass for the better understanding of this particular, observe two propositions:

1. First, that the Spirit must be had of us.
2. That we must by the help and assistance of the Spirit mortify our sinful nature.

#### *To Mortify Sin We Must Have the Spirit*

For the former, that we must have the Spirit, there is great necessity of this, for then we are in the Spirit, when the Spirit dwells in us, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ the same is none of his. God says that in the time of the Gospel he would pour upon them the Spirit of grace & supplication; that is, they were anointed with oil, that undertook any special office: So Christians, when they are made by Grace kings and priests unto God, they have this oil of the Spirit poured into their hearts our blessed Savior confirms this unto us in that speech to Nicodemus, *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit* (John 3:6). As Adam begot a man in his own likeness: so the Spirit it<sup>56</sup> begets us like unto itself; holy as it is holy, heavenly as it is heavenly.

For the better understanding of the point in hand, know that the Spirit is to be considered 2 ways: either according to essence or according to gifts and graces.

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<sup>55</sup> “Near” mortification has three elements: “a strong reluctancy” – a fight with sin; a broken and contrite heart (repentance); and an actual killing of sin. The third element, the actual killing of sin is divided into three parts: First, there the killing of sin is a lingering, painful death to sin – like the death of a man upon a cross. Second, there three particular signs which give evidence of such a death. The third particular element of killing sin is that it is done by the Holy Spirit. The matter of the Holy Spirit’s work takes up the majority of the remainder of the book. Ed.

<sup>56</sup> By using the word “It”, Wolfal is not denying the personality of the Holy Spirit. In the Greek language, Pnuema (“Spirit”) is a neuter noun, and thus is an “it”. In languages other than English, gender (he, she, it) does not necessarily correspond to the status of the actual thing. For example, in German, a young girl is an “it” and no one thinks that young girls are not female. When you read “It” in reference to the Holy Spirit, think “He” if that helps, Ed.

### ***The Holy Spirit Understood According to His Essence***

Now according to its essence and being it is every where. It fills heaven and earth, as it is excluded out of no place; so neither is it included in any, but in this sense we can no more be said to have the Spirit than other men and creatures can, in whom, and by whom we all live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28).

### ***The Holy Spirit Understood According to Gifts and Graces***

But in the second sense, in respect of its guises and graces, so some men are said in special, to have the Spirit as the Spirit quickens [the make active, rouse from sleep; hence, make alive] and conveys a principle of life into us, whereby we live the life of grace and that is called *Spiritus Inhabitans*, [Inhabiting Spirit] that takes up his seat in our heart; and *Spiritus Obsignans* [Seal or Sign of the Spirit], that sealing spirit whereby the Spirit witnesses with our spirits that we are the sons of God: Now in this sense we may be said to have the Spirit.

### ***The Help and Assistance of the Spirit***

That there must be the help and assistance of the Spirit. *Mortify the deeds of the body: a new heart will I give you and I will take away your stony heart* (Ez. 36:27). That is, that this might power of the Spirit is that which will help forward to the taking away of this stony heart, the Lord is said to wash away the filth of the daughter of Zion (Is. 41:4). And to purge the blood of Jerusalem by the Spirit of Judgment, and the spirit of burning; that is, this Spirit shall be in us, and shall enable us to judge ourselves and kindle such a fire in us, as shall melt away the dross of our corruption.

That you may the better understand what assistance it is that the Spirit gives unto us, in this work of mortification, give me leave to lay down you these three things.

### ***The Spirit Works by Means***

By what means the Spirit works, or helps forward this work of mortification: Although I deny not but the Spirit may & can work, where it lists [desires] and when it lists [desires], either by means or above means; yet our task is at this time to show how it works by means (John 3:8).

### ***Awakening the Conscience to Sin***

It awakens conscience, it does convince us of sin and discovers unto us the greatness of their number and foulness of their nature, thence it is that Christ, when he comes, does convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on Him, that howsoever the guilt of the Law lie heavy, and the weight thereof as a penalty, greater than a man can tell how to bear:

Yet than to have added hereunto another conviction, that is the condemning sin of infidelity, this does much aggravate and make sin out of measure sinful. Therefore, it is that our Savior Christ says, that *he that believeth not is condemned already* (John 3:18). As if he should have said, if a man were a drunkard or a swearer or a profane person, and yet if he can believe there is hope of pardon, but so long as he does not believe there is no hope at all. For as much as he is without God and without the Covenant of Grace: now the Spirit when it comes convinces our judgment of this: Till such time as the Spirit has done this, we are like Jonah, fast asleep in the bottom of the ship, the sea rages, the mariners row, the waves beat, the ship is tossed up and down, yet all this does but rock Jonah faster asleep. Till the shipmaster comes to him and says, “What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god!” (Jonah 1:6).

So it is with us, while we are asleep in our sins, the heavy wrath of God hangs over our heads, yea and judgments of God are broad in the world; yet we lie fast asleep, senseless and secure, not dreading any anger: but now, when this blessed Spirit of Christ shall waken us, and show us the danger and ask us what we mean to continue in this condition. Then we being to bethink ourselves and to shake off sluggishness and to cast about our own safety.

Saul thought himself safe enough when he was a persecutor (Acts 9:1-6), and that authority from the high priest was sufficient to bear him out that while he did breath out slaughter against Christ, he though he had done God good service, till Christ caused a light to shine from heaven he thought he had done God good service. Till Christ caused him a light to shine from heaven, and a voice saying, *Saul, Saul; why are you persecuting me?* (Acts 9:5). This indeed wakened him and made him shake and tremble and say, *Who are you Lord? And what would you have me to do?*<sup>57</sup> By this means it was that Paul of a persecutor becomes a preach & had his corruptions and cruel dispositions changed in him that of a fierce lion he became as meek as a lamb.

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<sup>57</sup> There is a textual variant at this point in the text which was followed by the KJV and quoted by Wolfal. The variant is not followed by modern translations. Metzger explains the variant as follows: “After διώκεις (and omitting ἀλλά of ver. 6) the Textus Receptus adds σκληρόνσοιπρὸςκέντραλακτίζειν. (6) τρέμωντεκαίθαμβνεπε Κύριε τίμεθέλειςποισαι καὶὁκύριοςπρὸςαὐτόν, which is rendered in the as follows: “it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (6) And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him.” So far as is known, no Greek witness reads these words at this place; they have been taken from 26.14 and 22.10, and are found here in codices of the Vulgate, with which \* substantially agree (all except the Vulgate add after θαμβν the words ἐπιτ γεγονότιαὐτ, taken from 3.10). The spurious passage came into the Textus Receptus when Erasmus translated it from the Latin Vulgate into Greek and inserted it in his first edition of the Greek New Testament (Basel, 1516)” (Bruce Manning Metzger and United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition a Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament* (4th Rev. Ed.) (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 318).

## *The Spirit of Christ Determines the Means*<sup>58</sup>

The Spirit of Christ it sets home the means [establishes the means] that God uses for our mortification. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God (2 Cor. 10:4). It is God that puts virtue and strength into them: Now there are several sorts of weapons that the Holy Ghost uses for this ends, as

### *First Means: Preaching*

The preaching of the Word of God, it is called the ministration of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:8). It is called the two edged sword that is sharper, that is cuts asunder [in two pieces] the soul and the spirit; the joints and the marrow and discovers [sets forth] the secret sins in our hearts (Heb. 4:12). But what is that makes this word so powerful? Sure it is the Holy Spirit of God that does it. We have this Word in earthy vessels (2 Cor. 4:7) that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us. It is not ministry that can make the word virtual [full of virtue], and powerful; nor is it the letter of the Word, but in the spirit.

Therefore, when you come to the Word and hear it opened unto you, do not look at the man, who he is, nor the instrument; but at the power which from the Spirit. St. Paul may plant & Apollos water, but it is God that must give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6). When it pleases God to accompany his word with the influence of his Spirit; then it is like fire to purge out the dross and like the hammer that breaks in sunder [(breaks) apart] our hard hearts (Jer. 23:29). That as Moses when he smote with his rod the rock, the water came forth abundantly (Num. 29:11): so when God smites our hearts with the rod of his Word, it is able to dissolve our hearts into tears, and godly sorrow unto repentance not to be repented of.

### *Second Means: Afflictions*

The Spirit sets home [puts into place] afflictions and troubles to make them virtual [effective, full of virtue], and efficacious to the subduing of our corruptions: *I will bring a third though the fire, I will refine them as silver refined; and will try them as gold is tried; and they shall upon my name, and I will hear them* [Zech. 13:9]. When God takes us in hand, then all the hurt that we receive by our afflictions is taking away our sins (Is. 27:7) all the fruit of their afflictions was to the end that their by the iniquity of Jacob might be purged. God suffered the bush to burn but yet it was not consumed because the Lord was in the midst of it.

The finer [the refiner] is most careful of his gold when it is in the furnace; and so is God for our good in the time of our affliction. As he said, *I had perished, if I had not perished*. Many

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<sup>58</sup> It is an interesting thing to note that the means listed by Wolfal require the interaction of other believers with the person being transformed by the Spirit: Preaching and examples necessarily require the existence and actions of other persons. Yet even affliction is most effective when borne in the body of believers. Ed.

good Christians may say that if he had not had crosses and losses in the world, he would have lost his soul. We read of some of the martyrs that have blessed God that ever they came to prison for Christ's sake that when they became mans' bondmen then they were Christ's freemen and could as comfortably feed on brown bread [lesser quality bread] & rouse [awake from a bed] in the straw as on a bed of downe.

What a marvelous in Manassah (2 Chron. 33:1-14), who in his prosperity was most wicked he fell to the idolatry of the heathen, used enchantment, witchcraft, caused Jerusalem to swim with blood; yet in his affliction, how did he humble himself? Greatly. How mightily was he then wrought upon! How did his heart smite him! Whence was this but from the Spirit of God that persuaded his heart unto it, for if that God's Spirit go not at long with those affliction that are on men, they are never the better but the worse for them: As you see it said of him that said, because the evil was from the Lord, he saw no reason to wait any longer.

And so it was of King Ahaz that in his extremity, he sinned ye tmore and more, therefore, the Holy Ghost does brand him with this infamous note [well known observation about a bad thing] : This is that King Ahaz, that he that afflictions could not mend nor make better (2 Chron. 28). And indeed when as it is so, that affliction does men no good, it is to be feared that they have rejected the last remedy that God means to bestow upon them, and God may say to them, *What should I smite them anymore* (Is. 1:5).

### ***Third Means: The Examples of Believers***

The Spirit sets home examples of good men, and makes them means to mortify our sins when we see men weaned from the world, upright in their ways, charitable to the poor, temperate in the use of the creatures; holy, humble and full of good fruits; such a man's life, when God pleases to set it on, does make other men repent, and seeing their good works to glorify God, *Shew thyself in all things a pattern of good works* (Matt. 5:16): now a pattern is a rule for others to follows (Tit. 2:7). Examples teach sooner than precepts and are more easy to the understanding to learn and also are more speedily taken into practice. A notional [a mere intellectual concept] goodness is little worth unless some demonstration may be given of it in the point of practice this we read of Hezekiah that he did walk in all the ways of father David, and of Josiah after him (2 Kings 18:3; 22:2).

Much more are godly mens examples very efficacious in their sufferings and in their deaths when the Spirit shall join with them. As how has the patience of Job been a pattern unto succeeding posterities [generations]. We want [lack] not many examples to prove, how the blood of the martyrs have been the seed of the Church: If Elisha did so calm the Syrians by that example of patience and kindness so that they came no more to annoy and infest their land (2 Kings 6:22-23). How much more may the patience of godly men persuade others to lay aside their cruelty and mortify their strong corruptions?

## CHAPTER 18

### *The Manner how the Spirit Does Mortify Corruption*

Come we now to the manner how the Spirit does mortify corruption.

#### *The Spirit Shows How We Should Mortify Corruption*

The Spirit shows the way how we should mortify corruptions, “*And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left*” it carries us through (Is 30:21). Were it not for the assistance we should either stand still, go no further, or else turn aside either to the right hand to superstition; to walk in the light of our own sparks and in the first that we have kindled. Or on the left hand, to profaneness and to hardness of heart & to commit iniquity with unsatiable greediness. Therefore that pray of Moses should be ours, “*Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight*” (Ex. 33:13).

Now a man is then in God’s way, when he goes about his work with carefulness, when a man devotes himself to his work and takes pleasure in it, as it was said of the King’s daughter, that she should forget her own people and her father’s house (which is a hard business) and this was to be done cheerfully and freely so when we leave our dearest lusts and cast off the yoke Satan who is a father to the children of Belial and a prince that reigns over the consciences, we must do it cheerfully as it is in the sweet song of Deborah who praised the Lord for the avenging of the Israel when the people willing offered themselves (Judges 5:2).

It is certain that we have then cause to bless the Lord when that God makes our heart willing to serve the Lord. It was a rule in the Law that if any man had built a new house or planted a vineyard or married a wife that he should not go to war that year (Dt. 20: 5-6): The reason was because that he could not do it willingly, out of that love and affection he had unto his present expectation of gain and comfort, that when he had left a home might make him less willing to adventure his life or at least to turn back before the battle was ended. So any man that goes to war against his corruptions let him know that if there be anything in the world that his heart stand affected unto which makes him unwilling unto this service be sure of this he is not fit to be a soldier against so potent an enemy: No man that wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life, then he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier: as if he should say, if you be cumbered and entangled with the world and cannot serve God willingly and by consequence not please Him.

#### *The Spirit Assists us in This Way*

The Spirit does assist us in this way, that we do the work strongly, when the iron is hard, men put to the more strength: this work is hard and difficult. Therefore you must be strong that you may go through. Therefore is the prayer of the Apostle for the Colossians that they might be strengthened with all might unto all patience and long sufferings (Col. 1:19). As it was said of

Sampson when he came to the vineyards of Timmath, *that a young lion roared against him and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him and he rent the lion as a man should rend a kid* (Jud. 14:5-6). So it is with us, we have the old Lion the Devil that seeks to devour us and were it not that the Spirit of Christ should strengthen us with all might and enable us to overcome him, we could not stand before him. As the Philistines encouraged one another, saying, *Quit yourselves like men, that you may not be servants of the Hebrews* (1 Sam. 4:9). So say I to you, be strong in the Lord and quit [acquit] yourselves like so many soldiers of the Lord of Hosts, that you may not serve sin, but fight out your God's fight that you may be more than conquerors against your spiritual enemies.

### ***The Spirit Takes Away Impediments***

The Spirit of Christ takes away those impediments that would hinder this work and disables [makes us unable] us from the performance of it.

#### ***Ignorance is a Great Impediment***

One great impediment that hinders this work it is ignorance: When men do not know those things that concern their peace for there is no true peace but where there is and has been war, many a man is like to some simple country-man if some great and potent man lay claim to some part of his land, though his cause be never so just ye he will rather lose his right, than go to Law for it. So is it with many that they will rather lose their soul than contend against their corruptions they out of their ignorance think them too potent and too strong for them. But now when the Spirit comes, it shows that he is greater, that is with us, than he that is in the world and they are cursed that go not out, *to help the Lord against the mighty*, he does comfort that as he did Joshua that none of his enemies should stand before him nor be able to prevail against him (Joshua 1:5). He will be with us while we are with him, nay the Spirit encouraged our hearts against this enemy (2 Cor. 15:2). As Caleb and Joshua did the Israelites saying fear none of your spiritual enemies for their defense is departed from them (Num. 14:9). And doubt not, but though you can not finally consume them, yet you shall make a happy conquest of them.

#### ***Hardness of Heart is an Impediment***

Another impediment is hardness of heart. It is called an obstinate heart because it does refuse mercy: a fat heart because it makes men insensible of their condition; a heart as hard as adamant stone because it makes men hate to be reformed (Dt. 2:30; Is. 6:10; Zech. 7:2). Now when the Spirit comes it softens this hardness and takes away this resistance and gives us hearts that are of a melting temper and makes the sons of the Temple sorrowful and men to be affected with grief as the sorrow of a travailing woman: the sorrow of a woman in travail as it is most grievous; so it is most comfortable in regard of the issue and event (Ez. 36:26; Amos 8:3; Hos. 13:13). The most forgets her sorrow, because that a manchild is born; so this breach that is made into the rocks of our hearts, thought it be grievous unto us, yet it is profitable in the issue for as

much as this seed time of tears is seconded with a harvest of joy, we want not examples to make good this point?

What an obstinate heart had Manassah till the Spirit of God brake it? What a hard heart had Paul till he was smitten by the Spirit of Christ? How was this lion then changed into a lamb! This is set forth by the Baptists, *Every valley shall be filled every mountain and hill shall be brought low and crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways shall be made smooth* (Luke 3:5): What is this, but every man that is low in his own eyes shall be raised by the Spirit and everyone that is high lofty shall be humbled. And such as walk in the crooked path of error shall be reduced and walk in the straight paths of truth in sincerity: and such as have been rought and obstinate shall be made plain and passable by the Spirit.

### ***Self-Love is an Impediment***

The next impediment that hinders a man from mortification is self-love. I do not mean that love which is natural, but that which is sinful: for no man ever hated his own flesh: But this is the property of sinful self-love; when a man shall love his body above his soul and himself more than his God and shall be at more cost and take more pains for the enjoyment of a base lust, than to enjoy Christ. Now when the Spirit comes it makes us to renounce all and to follow Christ (Heb. 10:34). To suffer the loss of our good and of our hopes as was said of Bradford that for that he would not make one scratch with a pen he lost all his hopes that he might have had in this world. And so did Moses refuse to be called son of Pharaoh's daughter and to renounce the pleasures of the Court and the treasures of Egypt that he might not lose the peace of his conscience nor dishonor his God (Heb. 1:24-26). Nay it does so make us of love with ourselves that neither father, nor mother, nor wife, nor children, nor our own lives shall be dear unto us, provided we may but finish our course with joy.

### ***The Ends Why The Spirit May be Said to Assist***

I come now to the third thing wherein I shall be brief; namely the ends why the Spirit may be said to assist us in this work and there are two reasons of it.

### ***The Spirit's Assistance Shows Human Impotence***

For to show mans' impotence that we are not able to do of it ourselves, a natural agent cannot do a spiritual work: *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Not one. Who knows not that we are polluted and defiled with sin and have disabled ourselves of strength and ability to do it?

Thence is that of the prophet, I know that the way of man is not in himself (Jer. 10:23); it is not in the man that walks to direct his steps: That is, we are too weak for any such work without God's grace assisting us, and therefore we have good cause to bewail our misery to lay

aside our pride and confess our poverty and to seek some other means of help and redress at God's hand.

### ***The Spirit's Assistance Shows God's Power***

To set out God's power: It is His privilege that He only is able to do His work. There are three ways whereby things come to have their being & existence: by generation, art or creation; the two former must have matter to work upon either *in potentia*, as generation, or in *actu*, as Art, where there is not a matter to work upon they can do nothing, now for as much as this work of regeneration & the new creation is called a new creation, it is beyond the work of a creature (Eph. 4:24) and only a privilege that does belong to the Holy Spirit to create in us qualities of holiness and thereby to abolish the whole body of sin. Thence it is that the Lord says, I create the fruit of the lips to be peace. And the prophet complaining in another place to who is that the arm of the Lord [is] revealed, it is that mighty and potent arm of the Lord that does this work; it is by His power and therefore He must have the honor of it.

As Joab when he was in hope to Rabbah, he sent messengers to David that he should come and take it, because the honor that would have been given him was too great for him, how much more should we, seeing our hope is the Lord, and our success chiefly by His power give all the honor to Him?

## CHAPTER 19

### *Certain Instructions From the Doctrine Premised*

From this doctrine of mortification we may observe divers [various] necessary instructions, both for the information of our judgment and well ordering of our lives, as

#### *The Holy Spirit Never Gives Liberty to the Flesh*

First, we may learn that such a doctrine as does give liberty to the flesh was never given by the Spirit of God.<sup>59</sup> For the Spirit is given us not only as a bridle to curb and keep in sin; neither a scourge to castigate corrupt nature, but chiefly as a sword to kill and destroy the very body of sin: it is the counsel of St. Paul that we being called to liberty should not use our liberty with great caution and watchfulness (Gal. 5:13), we will make our liberty to be a snare to us. The word used by St. Paul is ἀφορμὴ (aphorme) that signifies an occasion. It comes (as some think) from ὄρμη (orme) that signifies to make an assault. Because that if you give but yourselves liberty, never so little more then is fit.

#### *The Flesh Will Attack*

The flesh will make an assault upon you: As it is said of the Lion, that if you come but within his reach when he is caged up he will not miss but fasten upon you, so is it in this case. Therefore we must beware that we do labor for temperance and moderation; otherwise the flesh will seize upon us.

#### *Do Not Give Liberty to the Flesh*

And so while we give liberty to the flesh, we lose the peace of our conscience and that peace with God unto whom we have had a free access and audience in our prayers: Therefore know this, that the more liberty we give unto the flesh the more we do deprive ourselves of our Christian liberty, as the more delight that we take in the sinful pleasure of this life. The lesser and lower will be our delights and contentments in God: Herod did like well of the Baptist and heard him gladly, but yet his lust and the delight he took in Herodias and her daughter, he did eclipse it at the best and in the end took it quite away.

#### *Giving Liberty to the Flesh Causes Sorrow*

Nay how was David straitened [constrained; made narrow] of that spiritual freedom after such time as he had given liberty to the flesh, behold how many tears, how many prayers, how many sighs and groans did it cost him; before he was restored to his former comfort and

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<sup>59</sup> Note that Wolfal plainly teaches - contra many contemporary teachers – that Christian “liberty” is never “liberty” for the flesh. Ed.

consolation again. The more liberty a man takes for the flesh, the more he does enthrall himself. As the bird once in the snare, the more she does struggle, the more she does entangle herself.

Little do men know what disadvantages they cast themselves into when they take liberty to sin; there is a heavy doom pronounced against if them, if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the later end is worse with them than their beginning (2 Pet. 2:20-21). If any shall say, but what benefit have we then by our Christina liberty (Gal. 3:13)? I answer much every way: We are freed by Christ from the curse of the Law, from the irritation of it, whereby it was an occasion to make us sin more and from the rigor of it, whereby we are bound to perform it and live. Or else in the not doing of it perfectly to die eternally. We have a comfortable and free use of the creature and free access to the throne of grace in time of need, for the receiving of good things, both the benefit of soul and body in all these things (Heb. 4:16). We see we have much liberty granted unto us, but no liberty to sin; you will say how may a man do that he may give no liberty to the flesh.

#### *Not All "Liberty" is Profitable*

When a man will not take the full liberty that he may take. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient (1 Cor. 6:12). It may be lawful to go near the bank of a deep river, but if his foot should slip, or that he should tread so little awry, he would fall into very great danger. So is it here, when men hazzard themselves to the utmost bounds of their liberty, ten to one, but they drop into one sin or another, and so procure unto themselves one misery after another.

Dinah went but out to see the daughter of the land (Gen. 34:12).<sup>60</sup> Peradventure the thing might be lawful enough, yet because it was the utmost bounds of liberty, she not being cautious lost all the fairest ornament about her before her return. Thence it is that of our Savior if they say unto you, behold he is in the desert, go not forth, behold he is the secret chamber, believe it not. Why it might be lawful to go and see, suppose it might, yet because there is a snare laid open in lawful things. We should take heed we prevent, if it may be, the occasion.

#### *Be Diligent in Christian Duty*

If you would not give liberty to the flesh, shake off dulness in the performance of good duties (Matt. 26:41): *the Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak* (Matt. 26:41); the flesh is short paced and too ready to hinder us; the ass in the Law was to have his neck broken and not to be offered unto God. And the reason was because it was a dull creature: so it is in this case, that the flesh is dull and heavy and is so be we not stirring and zealous in our way; the flesh will draw us back and keep us so far back in the way to salvation, as that we had need to wish that the sun and the moon might stand still in their stations. As they did in the time of Joshua or else it is to be feared, we shall come short of our expected journey to the Kingdom of Heaven. Nay in the doing

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<sup>60</sup> Dinah was raped, Ed.

of the work of the Lord negligently, instead of a blessing, we procure a curse upon ourselves. Every sacrifice in the law was to be salted with fire. That is, there was to be the salt of wisdom, that they did perform duties with discretion. So there must be fire of zeal, that the services may be living and vigorous.

*To Not Give Liberty to the Flesh, Give God his Full Due*

If you would not give liberty to the flesh, give God his full due. The more you give to God, the less you have to give to the flesh. Give unto God the chief of your time, remember him in the days of your youth, because that is the most seasonable time to give unto God our first fruits and the beginning of our strength. And it is the time of most certainty for it is as the spring and summer of our days. It is most likely that we shall do God most service, then a man will put a man into his vineyard, when he may do him the most work. So if we wait on the Lord, in the days of our youth; it is most likely then we shall be set into our work and such a work as shall not be without a happy reward.

*Give the Lord Your Best Efforts*

Give the Lord the chief of your endeavors, the end to which you came into this world is not so much to plow up your lands or to dig in the earth, or to follow your trades and to cumber yourselves with Martha about many thing; but it is to work out your salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12); and to fight out your good fight and never be weary of well doing, knowing that in due time you shall reap if you faint not.

I do not say that men should neglect their callings, for he that provides not for his family is worse than an infidel. But this I say, that he that is so careful for the world, that he does not neglect his soul and the service of his God is little better than an atheist.

Yet let me tell you, that do plough your grounds must rather stand than that which plows up the fallow grounds of your heart, and you must not spend so much time in your shops as thereby to neglect the trade of your souls, nor be so busy about your counting books as to forget that great account that you are to make with God. For howsoever this may be good husbandry [productive use of resources] among men, yet sure I am, it is none of God's husbandry, as that the prophet said unto Ahab, behold, says he, there was in the battle a man committed unto me, but on these terms; that if I kept him not, my life should go for his, but while I was busy here and there, the man was gone. So it is in this case, that while a man is busy about this and that thing, that a man's days are spent and he drops into hell before he is aware and loses this soul for the satisfaction of his lusts.

Labor in the last place to be always on the growing hand to add unto your faith virtue, to your virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance, brotherly kindness, love, et cetera (2 Pet. 1:5-6). Then he concludes that if these things be in you and abound you will neither be barren nor unfruitful.

That as the spiritual part does increase, so the flesh and corruptions, they do decrease and go down. Though Uriah was a valiant man, yet when he set upon by strong men, then he fell and was overcome (2 Sam. 17:16). So it is in this case, that though corruption cannot be denied, but to be a potent enemy; yet when it is set upon by these graces it will fall and be deprived of the power it has.

## CHAPTER 20

### *Mortification of Sin Makes Christians Live With Comfort and Die in Peace*<sup>61</sup>

This shows unto us the way to lead a comfortable and a contented life and to die a peaceable and joyful death. It is chiefly when we find the power of sin mortified and subdued by us, for what is it that will distract the mind and disquiet the conscience more than sin will.

#### *Sin Causes Our Unhappiness*

This is that one that does separate God from us, and us from God; and is the cause whereby we are plunged into so many fears and why our minds hang in suspense and that our hearts are often pierced through with many sorrows, we would have fewer cares in getting of worldly things; less fears in heaping them up, and be very little disquieted at their loss.

#### *A Heart Crucified to the World*

Were it so, that there were not in us a covetous heart were we but crucified unto the world and the world unto us (Gal. 6:14). Then would we be friends of God and this would follow, that we would be at enmity with the world there would be no heart burnings nor malicious speeches and cruel deeds (James 4). Were it not from those lusts that war in our members were there a meek and a quiet spirit which is much esteemed of God.

#### *The Example of Achan*

While Achan was in the camp and his sin not discovered, nor found out, there was no peace to the camp, nor power to prevail against the enemies. But when he was discovered and justly punished; then they went on and prospered. So likewise while sin is not acknowledged nor a holy revenge taken against it; so long there is no peace in the conscience, but if that our hearts be once wrought to a holy indignation for our offenses, then fear not but there is way made for the entrance of that peace of God which passes all understanding.

#### *If You Would Have True Peace*

Therefore if we would have that peace that is fraternal among brethren, or that which is internal in our own hearts, or that which is eternal with God for ever, then mortify our lusts which are the causes at the first to deprive us of our peace and while they live will be fomenters of our discords. But were they mortified this enmity that they have wrought could not live. As Jonah said, cast me out and the

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<sup>61</sup> Wolfal now comes to his next main division: The promise which is offered to those who mortify the deeds of the body: Life. Ed.

storm will cease. So say I, cast sin out and there will be an allaying of all these garboiles<sup>62</sup> that are in the world, and making up of that breach between God and us, they have a rule in law, that if the man die the suit falls [the lawsuit is dismissed].

So it is here, that if we die of sin, then this suit will fall between us and God. Where there is no wood (says Solomon), the fire goes out. So where there is no talebearer the strife ceases (Prov. 26:20). What is this wood but sin, and what makes so great a cry in the ears of God as sin does? Therefore, take away sin, and the contention will be at an end.

### ***It is a Hard Thing to Mortify Sin***

The third instruction that we may observe hence is this: That it is an hard thing to mortify our sin, it is a hard to find out a disease as it is to cure it. The Philistines did quickly overcome Sampson, when they found where his great strength lay. It is easy for a man in general to say that he is sinner and yet if you should run over the Commandments and come to particular he would clear himself as not guilty of any and say at the young did, all these [things] have done (Matt. 19:20); and like the Harlot wipe her mouth and say I have done no wickedness (Prov. 3:20). Therefore, your care must be to search out wherein the great strength of sin does lie. And therefore we must labor to take the light of the word to direct us, and desire God that he will give us the light of this Holy Spirit to open eyes and that we may be able to see and know our own sinful hearts. And when we have found it, set upon this work with courage and resolution.

### ***Sin is Hard to Mortify, Because we Are Married to Sin***

Again, another thing that makes sin so hard to be mortified: As that marriage that is made between sin and us. After the people of Israel had mixed themselves among the heathen and made marriage with them, they were wonderfully hard to be brought to leave them. So when as a man is married unto his lusts, so it is hard thing for a man to leave them but now for a man to kill his wife, this is much more difficult.

It was a hard matter to flesh and blood, for Abraham to sacrifice his son, and yet the commandment of God he did it; so must we do, our obedience to God must exceed our love of our sins. Though the matter be difficult, yet it must be done. As Jephtah when he made a vow unto God, though it turned after to his great grief, also [even to the point] to part with his only daughter. Yet says he, *I have opened my mouth to the Lord and I cannot go back*. So may we, though that we find the matter to be hard that we are bout to do, to leave that we love so dearly; yet, resolve and vow against. [Citation] And when we have so done, that say as he did, *I have*

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<sup>62</sup> A Shakespearean word: *imbroglio* from *imbroglio*, "an entangling, an enwrapping, a garboile"; the Italian word *imbroglio* is itself a borrowed word from *Veneto* (Venetian) *brolio* meant a garden, politicians in Venice used to meet in a garden to cement alliances, so to go 'in brolio' meant to cheat or deceive, Ed.

*opened my mouth unto the Lord and I cannot go back, nor can I alter what is gone out of my mouth.*<sup>63</sup>

### ***Sin is Hard to Mortify, Because the Sin Adheres Closely***

Another thing that makes this work of mortification hard and difficult is the close adherence that sin has unto us, it winds itself so about us, as the ivy does about the tree till it eat out the heart and sap of it. So is it in this case, corruption does cleave unto us so as it is very hard to be freed from it. Absalom when he fled from Joab was so followed by Hazeel that he had no way to be freed from him but by sheathing his spear in his bowels [intestines, belly]. So it is in this case, there is no way to be freed from these corruption but by slaughter of them. They will not be driven away with neither fair nor foul speeches.

You may scare away a dog with harsh speeches, but you cannot do with a lion. Sin is of the brood of the old lion, the Devil, that will not be easily driven away, nor overcome. Therefore seeing it is that does so best us and does cleave so hard unto us, let us shake off everything that presses down and sin that does disquiet us (Heb. 12:1-2). But how? Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. As they that looked on the brazen serpent were cured of the sting that they had received of the fiery serpent. [citation]. So it is in this case, when we look up to Christ, he it is that can only staunch this bloody issue that sin has made. In one word, frequent means that God has appointed for the curing of your souls: the preaching of the Word, when you come with faith, then there is hope of purging; the Word has a cleansing power in it (John 17:17). As the pool of Bethesda when it was troubled, it had a healing virtue in it. So our hearts when they are troubled by the Word, God heals by it.

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<sup>63</sup> Wolfal is not stating that the story is about renouncing sin. Rather, he is using it as an illustration what must happen: We must be as willing to renounce sin when we follow Christ. We must be as willing to part with a dear sin as Jephthah was to part with his own daughter. Ed.

## Chapter 21

### *Our Weakness Appears in This, That we Need the Help of the Spirit*

This should teach us to take notice of our own weakness and how without the Spirit of Christ we can do nothing. We bear about an ignorant mind a perverse will, violent passions that have in them an aptitude of all sin and wickedness. That as Adam's actual sin corrupted his nature on the other side, corrupts and defiles our actions; so as the stream cannot be good because the is corrupt: fall we may, but rise we cannot; we may plunge ourselves deep into the pit of sin, but to recover ourselves, this work is beyond our strength. This is a work beyond our strength, we cannot contract uncleanness upon ourselves, but when we have done we cannot wash it off. And though we should use never so many outward means to that end. Yet were it not that the Spirit go along with us: Though we wash ourselves with snowwater, our own garment would defile us and make us unclean.

Therefore it will be necessary that we should examine whether we have the Spirit of God, yea or no; which will be able to help up and bear us out in this business.

#### *How Do you Know that You have Spirit?*

##### *We have the Spirit of Wisdom*

It is the Spirit of wisdom that does enable us, to lay a sure foundation and to make such battle against the strong holds of sin as these our lusts and corruptions cannot be able to withstand. We have not received the spirit of fear but of power, of love, and of a sound mind (1 2 Tim. 1:7). Where there is this sound mind, there must needs be power and love; such is the force of the Spirit; that it is set out, by the rushing of a mighty wind and by the fire; a mighty element, so as nothing that is combustible can stand before it.

Now when God shall say, "Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind! Blow upon my garden" (Song of Solomon 4:16); when he shall call the Spirit of bondage, which is the North wind to terrify and amaze [cause shock, riveted attention] us for our sins. And then shall send his Spirit of adoption as the South Wind to make us fruitful, in repentance and in the works of mortification. Then I say are we furnished with this Spirit of a sound min, wisdom is a dissension, but the excellency of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to him that has it. Much may be done with money, but more with wisdom, because money can neither slay sin nor assure us of life, but wisdom does both, wisdom will teach us to make provision for our latter end.

##### *Sin Opposed Because the Spirit Seeks Sanctification*

It is a Spirit of holiness and sanctity, and that is the reason of an opposition, taht there is unto sin in the soul. The Spirit lusts [a strong desire, not a sexual desire] against the flesh and flesh against the Spirit (Gal. 5:19), and they are contrary to one another. As it is with a fountain of living water, that if any filth be cast into it, it will work it out, by the constant running of it, so

it is with the Spirit, that when any corruptino motion is cast into the heart, it will not leave until it have purged it out.

And the reason is because there can be not agreement betwixt these, the one does always seek to dispossess and destroy the other, and therefore it is when a woman that has decked herself with beautiful garments, she will not come to unclean places and nasty company. So in this case the Holy Spirit will not endure the heart, where he lodges should be defiled or that it should be receptacle for unclean lusts. For if Christ could not endure that his earthly Temple should be a den of thieves, much less will endure that his spiritual temple should be a cage of every unclean and noisome lust.

### ***The Holy Spirit is a Craving Spirit***

It is a craving Spirit, it goes out day by day, and does crave assistance at God's hands to help us against our corruption. It is the Spirit that helps our infirmities (Rom. 8:26) and makes intercession for us. That as Hezekiah said, *Lord we know not what to do, our eyes are towards thee*. What was that made him wait on God, but this Spirit of Grace and supplicaiton: So say I, what makes a Christian to lift up strong cries and prayers unto God, when he is assault by the flesh, and to wait for strength from heaven. Is it not the Spirit that put upon it and makes us never to give over till we find success form God. It is not the making of a prayer that will serve your turns, but hte having of the Spirit of prayer that is it that will help you to wrestle with God with your prayers (Hos. 12:4). And as tears, as Jacob did and not to give over like the importunate widow until have your requests granted unto you (Luke 18:34-5).

### ***The Holy Spirit is a Cheerful Spirit***

It is a cheerful Spirit that thought the work be hard and sharp yet it makes us pass thorough it with much alacrity and cheerfulness. It makes us, while we are breaking up the fallow grounds of our hearts and while we are about to crucify the flesh and circumstance the foreskin of our heart. To be cheerful and rejoice because the end of that is joy and consoloation. For they that plow in hope and thresh in hope shall be partakers of their hopes. What makes the mariner to pass through so many hard adventures, by sea and land, but hope of some great advantage that may be for his advancement. Or what makes the soldier adventure himself into the heart of the battle, but the hope of a joyful victory. And what makes a Christian to take such pains with his heart, and to make such hot skirmishes against his lusts but the hope of good success and a glorious victory?

On the other side there is no greater sign of an unmortified heart, than when he is forced unto the work and drawn unto duty. As a bear to a stake, out of slavish fear and apprehensions of wrath: As Satan says of Job, that *skin for sin, and all that a man has will he give for his life* (Job. 2:4). A man will do much in extremity which is not a free but a forced service. But now if so he that there be a cheerful Spirit we are carried by it, ot this duty. As freely as Abraham was to be the sacrificing of his son. Not reasoning with flesh and blood, but out of the fear of God; the

love of holiness and hatred of sin: We are as cheerful at the death of it, as we delighted sometime at the commission of it.

## CHAPTER 22

### *An Exhortation unto the Duty of Mortification.*

For as much as we are naturally slow unto this work of mortification, both in respect of that love we have unto our lusts and also in respect that Satan and our deceitful hearts, do labor by all fair [reasonable] and possible arguments to beat us off from this work: Saying as sometime Peter did unto our Savior, Master, spare your flesh, this shall not be to you (Matt. 16:22). Such suggestions men have when they are pressed unto duty, that they should spare that labor these is no necessity of. Therefore it will not be amiss to quicken you up unto this duty by such considerations as these.

#### *If we do not Mortify our Sin, we will Displease our Lord*

In regard of sin, that if it be not mortified, we do highly displease Almighty God. Therefore, the Lord is said to have iniquity as that which is contrary to his Law. As that which is cursed of him, now that sin is thus displeasing to him will appear.

#### *Shown in the Biblical Account*

In regard of those sad [causing sadness] complaints and pathetical [causing pity] expressions that are used in Scripture against sin and sinners. When the sins of the old world grew to that height, that the whole earth was corrupt before God and that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, it repented the Lord that he had made man and grieved him at the heart (Gen. 6:6); a deep expression how much God is displeased with it. Now when God is said to be grieved, it is not in that he is subject to passions [uncontrolled emotions], but after the manner of men. Not *secundum affectum* but *effectum*, as they speak in the Schools [university philosophy]. That as men are greived when that are offended, so is God sore displeased with sin.

*Forty years long was I grieved with this generation* (Ps. 95:10-11). Then it was that he swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest. That after they had grieved him so long time together, his sore [extreme] displeasure did arise and so they perished in the wilderness. How was our blessed Savior grieved when he beheld the City and wept over it saying, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens* (Luk. 19:41). What can be a greater grief to a loving father or a tender mother than to see their children not to harken unto good admonition and exhortations. So is it unto Christ: When as we turn aside to the bypaths of sin, it grieves him much how does God complaint of his people: *O my people that have I done unto thee, testifieth against me* (Micah 6:2). Now when we hear God to show so much discontent in his bewailing of our sins. It should be a strong motive, to make us to bewail our own sins and offences against God.

Consider that sin is it, that does separate God from us and us from him. Thence it is that sometimes that God has left his people: *I would have forsaken mine house, I have left mine*

*heritage and delivered my dearly beloved of my soul in the hand of mine enemy* (Jer. 12:7). It must needs be a great matter that makes a man to leave his house, and forsake his heritage, either the house stand [original text illegible] untoward neighbors or it is in a bad soil, the water is nought & the ground barren, or else it could not be a man would leave it. So here, when a man spends his life among notorious and wicked men, and shall be like the unfruitful ground that brings forth nothing but thorns and briars, then it is to be feared (Heb. 6:7-8) that the Lord will leave him, and will pull down the hedge of his providence, and cause all the beasts in the field to come and devour (Is. 5:4). Now when we see that Christ and sin will not comply together. O labor then to mortify your corruptions that separate God from us, and us from him, and hinders things from you.

### ***Consider the Punishments Which Come from Sin***

Consider those grievous punishments which have fallen on men by reason of sins both on whole nations and on particular persons. See how the foundations of the great deep from below and the windows of heaven from above were set open by the sins of those times: How the clouds contrary to their nature dissolved into a show of brimstone and fell on that sinful city. In one word, wherefore was Cain smitten with such fears? And Herod was smitten with worms was it not for sin?

Lastly, if God would ever have spared any, he would have spared his own son. But Christ undertaking to become sin for us, he must not be spared, but must suffer a sorrowful and shameful death for that cause: Sure then if God have been ever so severe it should be our care that we should not spare it.

### ***If You Do Not Mortify Your Corruptions, You are Under the Power and Servitude of Satan***

Consider that if you do not mortify your corruptions then you are under the power and servitude of Satan. He that walks in sin is a servant of sin. And while he promises liberty to himself, he comes the servant of corruption (John 8:34; 2 Pet. 2:19). For of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage. For as it with a servant he does not his own will but the will of his master. So it is with a man that is in bondage unto sin and Satan is servant thereunto. As it is with a ship when the rudder and the anchors and the mast are broken, that it is carried whether the tempest will force it. So deplored is a man that is unmortified. He is carried whether the flesh and Satan will have him led captive, he is at his will. But were the power of sin mortified, we should find that these temptations would fall from as the viper from Paul's hand, and would not prevail against us.

Suppose a man have a strong house and great fortifications about it, yet if there be but a servant within that can unlock and unbolt the doors there is no safety there. So suppose there be never so many good gifts in a man, yet if he have his corrupt nature unmortified, be assured of this then that there is one within you, that will let in Satan, who will seduce you to sin.

### ***If You do not Mortify Sin, Satan Will Make Your Soul His Lodging***

If you do not mortify sin, Satan will make your souls his lodging. For as a mortified and sanctified heart is the seat of the Holy Ghost: so also an unmortified and an unclean heart is the seat of Satan. When the Spirit of God departed from Saul, then an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him (1 Sam. 16:14). So it is in this case, that if Christ by his Spirit dwell not in you, Satan will take place as it was said of Babylon that she was the habitation of Devils, and the kennel of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird (Rev. 18:2).

So that a man is not purged from his sin, the strong man keeps the house and all kinds of lusts swim in him: now then that these great enemies and these noisome and hurtful lusts may be destroyed.. Labor to mortify your corruptions, then will all these your enemies be driven away by the breath of the Spirit of Christ, and the brightness of his coming.

### ***If We Don't Mortify Our Sin, We Will be the Loser***

In regard of ourselves, if we do not mortify our sin, we cannot be but great losers by it: until then the word is unprofitable; it falls upon us, till it mortify corruption, as the rain that falls on the barren ground, it brings forth nothing but briars and thorns, fit for cursing (Heb. 6:7). So all the gain that you have, by the hid treasure of the holy Word of God and this pearl of the Gospel, it is but the aggravation of your sin and a favor of death unto you, so that this word that kills sin in others does but ripen them in you and this word that is wholesome nourishment unto others is but a potion fo death unto you.

### ***Until Sin be mortified You Can Have no True Peace in Your Conscience***

Until sin be mortified, you can have no true peace in your consciences. The wicked, says God, have no peace (Is. 57). As Jehu answered the king when he said, *Is it peace, Jehu, what peace*, says he, *so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezabel and her witchcrafts are so many*: So Say I, what peace can there be as long as lust and the body of sin does remain what peace can there be in the heart of a man. As it was said, that in these days of Shamgar the highways were unoccupied and travelers walked through the byways, till I Deborah arose (Judge 5:6). So until such time as sin is purged out, there is no peace but war, no walking in those ways of grace and peace, till there be a mortification of sin.

As you see it is, when that the highways are pestered with robbers, there is no safety to pass in or out: So when the highways of piety are pestered with lust, so as the passages are stopped and there will be no security until such time as that these be cut off. But if that you can come to slay and destroy these enemies that do waylay and fight against the soul. I say then you may walk in safety. And the truth is were we not enemies unto ourselves we need to fear no enemy. Our greatest and most desperate enemies are those of our own house even such lusts as have their breaths and breeding in our own hearts.

*The Last Great Loss is The Loss of Our Souls*

The last great loss that we do sustain by want of mortification is the loss of our souls which is the greatest loss that can be. For if every grass pile in our fields were a precious pearl and every stone in the street were a diamond; and every ear of corn in our fields were so many shining crystals, yet were they not all worth the soul: But now if a man should not endeavor to kill sin, sin will kill him. Suppose we the most fearful and dastardly man that may be, yet if he had this proposition made if you do not kill me I will kill you, I should suppose that this would make him fight. I tell you brothers that if you do not slay sin, it will slay you and if you mortify the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit you shall live, but if you live after the flesh you shall die.

## **CHAPTER 23**

### ***Containing a Brief Explication of the Last Words of the (ye shall live) by way of motive***

I have only one motive to add to persuade you to mortify sin, and that is the words of my text: If you do this, you shall live. Life, as you have heard, is a large word and does signify not only the life natural, but that of grace and glory. Now here I take it, for the life of glory, as standing in opposition to the death, that is set over in the former part of the verse, which is that eternal punishment in hell, which shall be certainly inflicted on unmortified men, that live after the flesh and this life that is set in opposition thereunto, is that life, that certainly may be obtained by such as do mortify the flesh and endeavor to destroy that body of sin now this happiness that is here spoken of, if I had the tongue of men and angles, yet I could not sufficiently set it out, yet to give you a taste of what is revealed that you may guess at what is not revealed but believed and waited for some thing the Scripture says of it.

#### ***There Will be Perfect Victory Over Sin***

There shall be a perfect victory over all your enemies, over sin that has been so turbulent over death that has been so fearful; and over hell that is so dreadful so as now we may boast as that puts off the harness and triumphs because that his warfare is accomplished, and our sins are pardoned. Here the church triumphant does change their swords into scepters, their corslets into crowns and their garments rolled in blood into long white robes to follow the lamb whithersoever he goes. Now we may sing with the saints the song of Moses hallelujah unto him that dwells in the highest and to him that sits on the throne forevermore.

#### ***There Shall be Resting From our Labors***

There shall be a resting from all our labors from all our works either of body or mind, so far as they did consist in our seeking, for the preservation of our present being, or from the attainment of our future well being: here it is laid upon us, to eat bread in the sweat of our faces: and to endure heat and cold, hunger and nakedness (Gen. 3:19) but there shall be an end of all these poor Lazarus shall rest in the bosom of rich Abraham and all the blessed saints shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God (Matt. 8:12).

Here there is our work of faith and labor of love, our hope waiting for the accomplishments of the promises and our tears of godly sorrow unto repentance arising from a bleeding and broken heart: but there our faith shall be turned into vision our love and hope into fruition and then all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, doubtless such a rest there is for the people of God.

#### ***There Shall be a Vision of God***

There shall be the vision of God, that is, we shall be brought into the presence of God and shall see God in Christ. The beams of Deity shall be so resplendent that from Christ his humanity as that we shall see him as we are seen. Therefore our Savior prays *that where he is, there they may be also* (John 3:2; 17:24). That they may behold his glory: a glimpse of this there was in the transfiguration when Peter said it is good for us to be here and that St. Paul which he saw things unutterable.

### ***We Shall See With Greater Knowledge***

We shall see with greater enlargements of knowledge. No eagles shall be so strong that can look on the Sun as our then that can look upon him, at whose presence the sight of many sins would vanish into darkness. If Adam in the state of nature could understand so much of god as to give names unto the creatures sure in the state of glory there will be a great augmentation of that sight. So that he that was an unlearned man shall know that at once that many a great doctor have been many years bearing heads about.

### ***This Sight Will be Glorious***

Again in respect of the sight, this sight must be glorious, the light of the sun is no more to be compared unto it, then the light of the candle is in the light of it: no, nor as one observes well it is all the whole heaven it is as it were nothing but all glorious Sun.

### ***We Shall Enjoy the Fruition of God***

Lastly we shall enjoy the fruition of God, that which is begun in the vision of God shall be perfected in the fruition of God: Dives saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom but what was this to Dives it was no ease to him but as we shall see him so we shall enjoy him; he will love us with an everlasting love and we shall live with him forever (Ps. 36: 86:8-9). Nay we shall be abundantly satisfied with the fulness of his house and he shall make us drink of the rivers of pleasure for at his right hand is fulness of joy and pleasure forevermore (Ps. 16).

If a man had a certain measure of joy in heaven were it not full it would nto content the mind of a man and if he had fulness were it not perpetual it would not give content but now seeing this joy is both perfect and perpetual there will be full content in it.

To conclude all blessed and happy are all those that have mortified this body of sin, out of an hatred and holy indignation against it, they are careful to sin no more; for they shall live a life of grace here, and life of glory hereafter.

Finis.