

Mr. Croswell's

Reply to a Book lately publish'd,

Entitled,

A Display of GOD's special Grace,

Dr. Colman, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Prince, Mr. Webb, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Foxcroft, and Mr. Gee.

AND THE SALE OF TH

BOSTON, Printed and Sold by Rogers and Fowle, below the Prison in Queen-street, near the Town-House.

Where may be had Nadir's Almanack for the Year 1743. wherein is sundry useful Observations, &c.

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Connecticut, New-London, Nov. 5. 1742.

E the Subscribers having lately seen a little Book entitled, A Display of GOD's special Grace, attested by seven of the Ministers in Boston, omitting other Things, can't but express our utter Dislike of what is asserted towards the latter End, as contrary to the Experience of the Generation of GOD's Children; who never find that GOD withdraws sensible for and Comfort from them while they live in a Course of vital & true Holiness, as is there supposed (Page 108) but only when there are great Breaches in that vital and true Holiness which once they maintain'd.

We further testify, that those Ministers putting Perfons upon sinding out their Justification by their Sanctification (in such a Manner as they have done) hath a direct Tendency to make the many Thousands of strict Pharisees into whose Hands that Book may come, easy and quiet in their Minds, and so speak Peace to themselves while GOD hath no Peace for them.

It would be grievous to us to bear Testimony against those Gentlemen who have attested to that Book, some of whom have been very dear to some of us, did we not think the Cause of Christ constrained us: And we expect to be faulted by some Ministers who concur with us in our Sentiments about the Book, but think it not prudent to declare themselves openly. Yet we out of Love to Christ, and Pity to the immortal Souls of Men, do find our selves in Duty bound to take upon us this unwelcouse but very necessary. Task.

The great Character and Influence of any of those seven Ministers is so far from being a Reason, why we should cause our Tongues and Pens to lie still, as some may imagine, that it ought the rather to induce those Ministers who are sensible they have published any Thing dangerous to the Souls of Men, to bear open and publick Testimony against it, which we the Subscribers now solemnly do as in the Sight of GOD, who searchest the Heart and trieth the Reins, begging that his Blessing may accompany what we have done, and leaving all the Events of it with Respect to the good or Ill-will of Mentous, intirely in his Hunds,

Timothy Allen Andrew Croffwell Timothy Symnes John Curtis.

N. B. The Rev. Mr. Wheelook and the Rev. Mr. Pomroy have also inConversation highly condemned the above-mentioned Book, as containing Doctrines that are most dangerous and defirictive to the Souls of Men.

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A Reply, &c.

AVING lately seen a little Book unjustly stil'd a Display of GOD's special Grace, attested by the seven following Ministers in Roston, viz. Dr. Colman, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Prince, Mr. Webb, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Foxcroft, and Mr. Gee: Many Things in it appear'd exceptionable. Especially the Dialogue between Theophilus and Libertinus, and the Remarks which Theophilus makes after Libertinus is withdrawn; almost the whole of which is contrary to the Experience of the Generation of God's Children, and the infallible Oracles of Truth.

However I had no Thoughts of making any Reply to it for some Time; till God was pleas'd to give me a cleater View of eternal Things and the Worth of Souls: And then I thought there was a Necessity laid upon me to do it, in Case, it was not speedily

done by fome Body elfe.

Wherefore having earneftly befought the Lord, to give me a fingle Eye to his Glory, I now undertake this Work in full Assurance that his Blessing will accompany it, and that it will be a Means of recovering some Souls from the Snare that is laid for their Feet.

Omitting all the rest of the Book, I shall confine my Observations to that Part only which I have just mentioned to be more especially faulty and dangerous. And in the first Place, we may take Notice of the Character of Libertinus. He is represented is " one that holds nothing but Faith, and don't

care how wickedly he, or others live, fince they were justify'd from Eternity, and God will not be angry at them for their Sins, Christ having satisfied for them already: In a Word, He is one that turns the Grace of God into Licenticusness.

And who is this Antinomian design'd to personate? A great Part of those who are zealous for the Work of God without Controversy. And is it applicable to them? No; (bleffed be God) I believe the Author could not to fave his Life, find one fingle Person in each of our Colonies to whom the Character is adjusted.

It must be granted that Men naturally and commonly run from one Extream into another: and inasmuch as People have so generally been arminianized, though they did not know it; it would not be strange if many should exchange Arminianism for Antinomianism, which is equally fatal. However, through the tender Mercies of our God, that Soul damning Error hath got but little Ground among us yet: God grant that hereafter it may not prevail among us like a Flood; and that this Dialogue may never be any more to the Purpose than it is at present.

But though the abovementioned Creed of Libertinus is what I would pray against and warn People. against as far as there appears Occasion: There are other Things in which he is more found in the Faith than Theophilus, that is than the Author, and all the Reverend Gentleman who attest his Performance. Very great Honour was certainly done him by making him dispute for Ministers calling Sinners to come to Christ immediately: And Assurance being (at sometimes) the common Priviledge of all Believers: How be it these Divines, meant not 10, neither did their Hearts think so.

These two Things which they make

contend earnestly for, are by a nick Name called Antinomian Conceits: Though Anti-Arminian Tenets is the proper Name for them. As to Ministers calling Sinners to come to Christ Immediately, without getting first the customary Preparations, I shall en-deavour to set this Matter in a very clear Light. That the great God calls, invites, and commands poor perishing Sinners to come to Christ (or believe on him) for Life and Happiness, every one will own: And that he requires them to come immediately, ought not to be doubted; for not to require them to come immediately would in Effect be to give them Liberty to despise Jesus Christ a little longer, which can't be imagin'd without Blasphemy. The divine Command and Invitation runs thus: To Day if ye will hear his Voice. Accordingly the Apostle having in the latter End of the fifth Chapter of the 2d Epistle to the Corinthians, declar'd that God had commission'd and requir'd him and others his Fellow-Labourers, to preach that God was reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespasses unto them; he calls them immediately to accept of the great Salvation; we pray you in Christ's Stead be ye! reconciled unto God. And prefently in the next Chapter, he tells them, Now is the accepted Time, NOW is the Day of Salvation. As if he had faid, be ye reconciled to God to Day; If you will accept of Christ immediately ye shall be faved. And, Asts. 16. 31. He invites the Jaylor immediately to believe on Jesus Christ, or to come to him: And doth not give him, any Directions how he must do this: Which is as much Antinomianism as what these Divines fault any Ministers for in this Day. To object that we must not call Sinners to come immediately, is more proper for Arminian Ministers than Calvinists. Calvinistical Ministers always bid Sinners do, what they

know

know they can't do. If it be faid that though unconverted Persons can't come to Christ or believe on him; yet they can pray and read, and the like, after a Manner: I answer they can believe on Christ too after a Manner; but in neither Case in such a Manner as is acceptable unto God. Besides, this is what Sinners need to be convinc'd of, that tho' they must come to Christ, they are absolutely unable to come to him. And what is more likely to give them this necessary Conviction than their being commanded in the Name of the great God to come to Christ immediately, and their being told that they deserve Damnation for every Refusal? This puts them upon doing their utmost, and convinces them that really they can do nothing: And so is a Means of humbling them to the Dust, and of causing them to come to Christ to take the dreadful Burden off from their finking Souls. Whereas when Ministers give their Hearers a long Train of Directions, this naturally causes them to imagine that if they observe them carefully, God will thereby be inclin'd to save them, and this Imagination will lessen their Conviction, and lighten their Burden: And for Minifters to lighten the Burden of Sinners, is in Truth only to stop them from coming to Christ. Matth. 11. 28. Telling bow to come, however specious it may look is indeed and in Truth, stopping Sinners from coming at all. The awakened Sinner must have his Way hedg'd up: He must be lost in a Wilderness before he is found of Christ; God brings such into the Wilderness and speaks comfortably to them there, and only there. 'Tis this Way of Preaching, I make no Doubt which hath been a great Cause why Multitudes in Years past, who were under strong Convictions, never were converted, but turn'd out Pharises instead of true Christians. Their Ministers never Digitized by Google

never hedg'dup their Way; but always kept the Way to Christ, (as they call'd it) open and clear before them: And therefore instead of guiding them to Christ they only led them from Christ to Ordinances, which they (in Effect) made a Christ of. The Way of Preaching which these learned Divines find Fault with, is highly recommended by Dr. Franck: Mr. Whitefield every one knows is the most famous for calling Sinners to come to Christ: And all those Ministers whose Labours have been signally bless'd, have been much in the Practice of it. I freely own it was a great while before I could with any Confidence call Sinners immediately to their Saviour; it being fo contrary to the legal Way into which we had all gone too far: And even fince I have practic'd it with some Success (to God be all the Glory) fometimes when I am in a Duller, and consequently, more legal Frame, it seems to be the Foolishness of Preaching. But when the Love of God is shed abroad in my Heart; when I realize that there is an Ocean of Mercy for perishing Sinners; when I see a precious Christ standing with open Arms inviting, and praying the worst of Sinners to come to him, and welcome: Oh then I am sweetly constrained to cry out to them, Come, come, come: And it seems as if I could continue to call them till I breathed out my very Soul.

I am not absolutely against all Sorts of Directions. Peter bid Simon Magus to pray to God: And Iknow of no Minister, who doth not sometimes tell his Hearers to cry to God Night and Day for a new Heart, and an Interest in Christ, &c.--But since there is such a violent Propensity in Sinners when awaken'd to rest in their Duties, fuch Directions as these Ministers plead for, and are commonly practic'd, will be exceeding likely to keep them from Christ, and to marry them to the Law their natural Spoule. When Ministers preach so, as Mr. Erskine expressent it,

Instead of courting Christ a Bride, They harden Rebels in their native Pride.

He goes on and faith:

Much rather ought we in God's Name to place

His great Artillery straight against their Face;

And throw hot Sinai Thunder-Bolts around,

To burn their towering Hopes down to the Ground.

To make the Pillars of their Pride to shake, And damn their Daings to the burning Lake.

Instead of giving Sinners long and particular Directions how to close with Christin the Way of Duty, it would certainly be much better, to be almost continually fetting before them the Vengeance of the eternal God, who is their Enemy; and to befeech and command them in his Name to come to Christ for Refuge, and venture their Souls upon him, and thereby to be reconcil'd to this dreadful Enemy before they go out of the House of Worship. Sinners are in Danger of being devoured by the Wrath of God before Sermon is done: Why then should they not be call'd immediately to get into the City of Refuge before the Avenger of Blood overtakes them? We that are Calvinists need make no Difficulty of believing, that God doth in a Moment in the twinkling of an Eye reveal his Son to Sinners, and sometimes in his Sanctuary; that while they have endeavour'd to stretch forth the wither'd Hand, it hath been made whole, infomuch that they who came to the publick Worship Enemies to God, have went home reconciled through a dear Redeemer: Why then should not Ministers call upon all the Prisoners of Hope who are in equal Danger, to get into the strong Hold immediately, and not to have that God into whose Hands it is a fearful Thing to falt, for their Enemy one Day or Hour, or Minute longer?

If it be faid that provided Ministers tell their Peo-ple the Danger of resting upon Duties, let them give never so many Directions there can be no Hazzard: I answer by telling what an honest Man in the Neighbourhood told me sometime ago; which I have often thought on, and hope my Readers will too. Our Minister, (said he) "settles his Hearers fast down " upon Works. He is forever urging unconverted Persons to do a great Number of Duties: and yet once in a while he tells us we must not depend " upon our Duties. It feems to me, (continued he) this is just as if a Woman should be rocking a Child to Sleep and should whisper once in a while, "Child you must not go to Sleep, and then go on rocking again as fast as ever."

It is tho't upon it was, that fuch a Woman could not be more properly rocking her Child to Sleep, than fuch Ministers might be said to be settling their People upon Works, who were perpetually driving

them to their Duties. Thus have I shewn very largely that poor Liber-tinus's Divinity upon this Head, is better than our Authors, and his Confederates. I can't help remarking that 'tis strange, that though these Divines did not see they were contradicting the Scriptures, they did not at least see that they contradicted themselves; particularly in Page 89. For they there tell us that they themselves invite Sinners to come to Christ " immediately, but they would have them first pray that the Hindrances might be remov'd out of the Way. They exhort to look to Christ immediatebut, first get the Doors of their Hearts opened. Now all these Buts thew that 'tis not immediately. 'Tis just as if a Man thould bid his Servant come to him

him immediately, but withall bid him flay a little while, and do something else first. The plain English of what they say is no better than this, viz. We do invite Sinners to come to Christ immediately, but yet we do not invite them to come immediately. I must obferve further, that I never read any Thing more legal and dangerous; than their supposing that Men. must get the Hindrances out of the Way in Order to their coming to Christ; and that their Everand Hearts some what open'd before they behold him, or receive him into their Hearts. It may be the Gentlemen will be constrained publickly to own the Danger of those Expressions: For this, and only this is pure Gospel, that Jesus Christ is both Righteousness and Strength; and that poor Sinners must come to him for all that they want.

I come now to the next Point disputed between Theophilus and Libertinus. And here I will venture to fay, that though Libertinus talks sometimes very weakly and wickedly (for 'twas in the Author's Power to make him talk just as he would have him) he is

certainly on the right Side of the Question.

of What Theophilus makes him fay is, that Mani-" festation or a Perswasion of our good Estate is of the Essence of saving Faith. Pag. 90. But what Libertinus meant, or rather, what those mean and fay, whom Libertinus is designed to represent, is this, and no further, viz. That Manifestation, or a Perswasion of our justified Estate, is effential to the Exercise of saving Faith. They know that Manifestation is not necessary to the Being of it; for Persons may have the Habit of Faith, and yet for a Time walk in total Darkness, and think they are cut off for their Parts, and that there is no Hope for them This Distinction well observed will make our Authors fine Reasoning and boasted Demonstra-B 2 tion.

flon, appear to be of no Force nor Vertue And why should it be thought a Thing incredi-

ble that Manifestation should be essential to the Ex-

ercise of saving Faith: Or that, when Men do Exescise true Faith, they are always sensible of it? It focus to me on the contrary the greatest Absurdity in the World to suppose that the Soul should trust Jesus Christ for Salvation, and love him, and not be sensible of it. Nay I could as easily believe that the Saints now in Heaven don't know they are there, as that the Saints on Earth should have their Souls drawn forth to Christ in Love & Reliance, and not know it at the same Time. They that believe on the Son. of God, have the Witness in themselves, I John 5. 10. i. e. While they believe, or exercise Faith, it is m nifest to them that they do exercise Faith. And this inward Witness or Manifestation, is absolutely ne-

cellary to convince any Person of his pardoned and justified Estate; all the Works of Righteousness which we do, without this, being but a rotton Foundation

to build our Hopes upon. Though our Author, and his seven Witnesses are pleas'd to tell us "that Men may be good Christians, though they never

" had any olear Manifestations of the Love of God; s and that Persons must find out their Justification

" by their Sanctification." This is what is inculcated over and over again in Page 108, 109. (The two most horrible Pages in the whole Book.)

I can't forbear observing here what a sweet Harmony there is between these Divines and Doctor Stebbing, that Doctor of Arminian Divinity in the grand Article of Man's Justification, or the Evidence of it. Nay there is not one Disciple of James Arminius, but will subscribe their Doctrine with

Heart and Hand. This puts me in Mind of what an Episcopal drminian Minister told me triumphantly a little

while ago, viz. "That fetting aside a few over-* zealous Calvinists who made such Consusion, the Rest of the Presbyterian Ministers preached almost intirely as he did." His Meaning was, that whereas he taught Men might know they were good Christians by their regular Lives, almost all the Presbyterian Ministers preached the same Doctrine.

Pudet Hac opprobria nobis, &c. For my Part I think all our Zeal against Arminians is scarce worth one Straw, if we coincide with them hers. These Gentlemen have certainly put an Argumentum ad Verecundiam into the Mouths of all of that Perswasion. Supposing they should hereaster bear Testimony against the Arminian Ministers in Boston and elsewhere; how miserably must they come off in the Engagement; might not the Arminian Minifters fmartly reply, "You had better let us alone for your own Sakes: If we are legal and dangerous "Preachers you yourselves must come under the same The fame Sort of Persons who "Condemnation. fthink themselves good Christians according to our "preaching will think themselves such according to "yours. For however we may differ in other Matters "there is a perfect Agreement in this main Point; that sis, that a good Life, i.e. Good Works are a sufficient *Evidence of a Man's Justification. You say, That if Persons maintain a Course of vital and true Holines, "they need not doubt but they are the Children of "God, tho' they don't feel the Love of Christ, nor e-Sever had any clear Manifestations of it: And this seyou know is a Doctrine according to our own Hearts. "In one Word; you and we combine together in fetsting our People to find out their Justification by their Sanctification. We are glad to see you do so much 46 Honour to Morality in such a Day as this, as to make fit a good Evidence of a Man's Title to the heavenly Inheritance,

"Inberitance, when he can find nothing else. Where"fore dearly Beloved, let us not weaken one another's
"Hands; but rather let us take sweet Counsel together
"against those that are of the contrary Mind; such as
"Whitefield, Tennant, Davenport, and others of the
"Enthusiastick Tribe; Men who turn the World upside
"down, and have come hither also."

Thus tartly I say might the Arminian Ministers retort, in Case they should ever be so zealous for the Lord of Hosts, as to charge them with the Blood of damned Souls by fixing their Hearers upon Works, and not suffering them to be espoused to a glorious Christ. Nor do I see how they could wipe away the Reproach since the Publication of that little Book, unless it be by owning that when they put their Names to it, they did it in their Haste, and knew not when they did.

Their former, or future Zeal against the Christ despising and Soul-murdering Dostrines of Arminius, will do them but little Good: For if they say a Canfederacy in this one Article of a good Life's being a sufficient Evidence of a justified Estate, they will be had ble to be tax'd with coming into their Secret, and joining with them in the same dreadful Work of stapping Souls from coming to Christ.

I say the same dreadful Work of stopping Souls from coming to Christ: For there is Death in that Doctrine: It leads right down to the Regions of Darkness and the Habitations of Despair. There are now without Doubt, many Thousands of poor Creatures groaning under the intolerable Wrath of the great God, whose Belief of this Doctrine, was the Means of stopping them from Christ, and so of their going down to that Place of Torment,

If any think that my Zeal is not according to Knowledge; and that I make more ado about this Tenet than

than is needful; I defire only to produce my Caufe and bring forth my strong Reasons against it, by which those who realize the Worth of immortal Souls may be convinc'd that my Zeal on this Occasion is rather within Bounds, than beyond; and that tis impossible for the Pen of a Man, or the Tongue of an Angel to go too far in setting forth the Danger of this Doctrine: The plain and strong Tendency of which is to settle all Strict Pharisees upon the damnable Foundation of their own Works; to keep those who are but little, from being much concern'd about their Souls; to make those who are much concern'd to loose their Convictions, and stop short of Christ and the New-Creature; to fill the World full of Oppofers to the Work of God in the Land; and, as a Consequence, upon the whole, to chase pure and undefil'd Religion from the Earth, leaving nothing in the Room of it, but the Religion of Nature & Arminius. All which Charges

it is a deplorably easy Thing to make good. And r. I say it is adapted to settle all strict Pharisees upon the damnable Foundation of their own Works. Among the many Thousands of strict Pharifees into whose Hands that little Book may come, is there one but may think himself a good Christian according to it? No; not one. Every close Hypocrite under Heaven, lives an holy Life as he thinks, though he doubts of his Faith confider'd abstractly from Works, and as for the Love of God he never had any clear Manifestations of it. These are allow'd to be true Believers; Page 108, 109: And fince close Hypocrites have got so far, these Gentlemen do in Effect tell them that they are travelling apace to Heaven, though God knows they are going swiftly down to Hell. And oh how glad will Mulcitudes of them be, to see that Doctrine fo well attested which hath made their Confciences eafy; and kept them from Jesus Christ all their Days! 2. It

(16)
2. It tends to keep those who are but little concern'd, from being much concern'd about the Things that belong to their Peace. While they believe that a good Life (as it is call'd) is a sufficient Evidence of the Divine Favour this will put them upon feeking after a good Life instead of converting Grace. The Favour of God will also appear to them as what may easily be obtained, which will keep the Burden from being heavy enough to make them want a Christ to take it off.

3. It tends also to make those who are in the Bitterness of their Souls enquiring what they shall do to be faved, loose their Convictions, and so stop short of Christ and the new Creature. Such Doctrine is more dangerous to fuch Persons than the rankest Arminianism itself. For they wou'd avoid reading or hearing a Discourse in Favour of gross free Will and Justification by Works as they would thun a Viper or a Rattle Snake: Whereas the other Doctrine of Men's finding out their Justification by their Sanctification would be likely to fix them upon a fandy Foundation before they were aware of it; especially if the Writer or Preacher of such palatable Doctrine, is look'd upon as a strict Calvinist, and a Man of experimental Piety.

4. Fire doth not more naturally ascend upwards than this Doctrine tends to fill the World with Oppofers to the glorious Work which God is now carrying on in the Multitude of his tender Mercies. every where strongly and vehemently prejudic'd and enrag'd against the Instruments and Subjects of the divine Work for this Reason, viz. Because they tell them continually of the Danger of that Flesh and Blood Doctrine instilled into them by their Teachers as well as taught them by corrupt Nature, viz. That they must look into the Goodness of their Lives in order to know, whether God be at Peace with them or not. 'Tis owing to this that the Great City Niniveh swarms with those

hose who take Counseltogether against the Lord and his Anointed. For had their Ministers never shut such Ministers put of their Pulpits who were zealous for the Work of God; and had they never invited those Mimisters into their Pulpits who were zealous against the Work of God; nor prejudic'd the Minds of their Hearings any other Way; it could not have been difficult to account for the dreadful Opposition there, so long as their Ministers give it under their Hands, that Men may conclude they are goodChristians from the Goods ness of their Lives, even tho' they don't feel the Love of God nor ever had any clear Manifestations of it. By all which Reasons put together, it is as plain as the Meridian Sun, that this Doctrine hath a strong Tendency to destroy pure and undefil'dRellgion,& the Power of Godliness, from under the whole Heavens; leaving us nothing in the Room but the Religion of Deists and Arminians; and confequently that 'tis the Duty of those whom God hath plac'd as Watchmen upon Jerusalem's Walls, to cry aloud and spare not, but to lift up their Voices like Trumpets against it, witnessing both to small & great in Season and out of Season the everlasting Misery and Destruction that are in the Ways of it.

I am fure it hurts me to bear this Testimony against what those Divines have so publickly and zealously born Testimony for. I have not the least Ill-will towards any of them; but feel a Tenderness for them all; and know that I love some of them for their Kindness to me when sick at Charlestown. I speak the Truth; my Conscience bearing me Witness; I am now punishing my self so that I can hardly suffer my Pen to run on and if they knew how much I have smarted at the Tho'ts of putting them to Pain, they would very easily forgive me. If I had an own Father in the Ministry who had put his Hand to that Book, I am persuaded I could not be easy without declaring against it in the

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Face of the World: For we must not know our Relations nor Friends in the Cause of Christ. To say all in a Word: I would gladly have let them alone, if my Conscience had but let me alone-----But how can I be dumb and not open my Mouth when they have done what will be a Means of Damning many Thousands of Souls un-less the infinite Mercy of God prevent. If the Gospel be of any Value; if the Soul of a Man is worth more than the Spirit of a Beast; Now is a Time to speak, and not to keep Silence. Now, God blows the Trumpet in Zion: My Soul hath heard the Alarm of War; and the Question is, Who will arise on the Lord's Side; Who? Who will come to the Help of the Lord against the Mighty? Here I expect it will be ask'd, Whether Holiness in general, and fometimes particular Branches of Holiness are not in the Scriptures made the Marks of a justified Estate? To which I reply, Undoubtedly: but not

seperately from the Witness of the Spirit, and the divine Sealings which the Scripture makes the common Priviledge of all Believers. Eph. 1. 13. As joyful Discoveries of Christ are a vain Hope with-

out Holiness, so is Holiness without these. Neither will do alone; but both together may give a Person strong Consolation and Evidence that he hath fled for Refuge to the Hope set before him. To bring that of the Poet to a facred Use:

Alterius sic altera poscit opem res et conjurat Amice.

Veritas (æque ac Virtus) est in Medio posita.

The Antinomians and these Learned Divines have on both Sides run into Extreams, and so miss'd the Truth.

The Antinomians dream, that if they have but Discoveries of Christ, it is no Matter how they live; they can't fail of Heaven. But these filthy Dreamers are as far from the Truth as Hell is from Heaven. These Divines on the other Hand, imagine that if Men live very strict Lives, they may conclude themselves God's adopted

adopted Children, they don't feel the Love of Christ, nor ever had any clear Manifestations of it: whereas if they had only said, That an holy Life, and fenfible Communion were the only fure Foundation of Hope, this would have been found Speech that could not be condemned.

Without Doubt it will be enquired next, what shall poor deserted Believers do when their Joy and Communion is all gone? And whither they may not conclude that they are fincere from the Holiness of their Lives? I answer that when a Child of God is in such dreadful Darkness he must not be sent to the Law for Comfort, but to Christ the Hope of Israel and the Confolation thereof. The Way for such an one to know that he really is justified, is by finding in himself that which doth justify; and not by finding in himself that which don't justify, as these Gentlemen suppose. A deserted Believer can have no further Ground to believe he is justify'd, than he can realize that he hath actually tafted of the Love of Christ, or believed on him: Nor will he take Comfort in any Thing short of this. All his Righteousness which he hath done he will not suffer to be mention'd to him. If any tell him how holily and unblameably he hath walk'd, he will fay, miserable Comforters are ye all. A Christ is what he wants; a Christ is what he must have: A Christ is what he 'will have: None but Christ: None but Christ; is the Language of his Soul. And when God hath humbled him to the Dust, and made Christ precious to him by the Want of him, he reveals his Son to him again, and causes him to taste and see again that the Lord Jesus is good, and that Wessed and happy are all they who put their Trust in him. Thus it is that all Be-lievers have their Evidences cleared up to them when they have been deferted, and not by confidering that they maintain a Course of vital and true Holiness, as these thele these Gentlemen tell us. Nay, I will undertake to prove that a Believer thus deserted can as easily make a World, as maintain a Course of vital and true Holiness: Which because it is a Thing of the utmost Importance, and so contrary to the Belief of most Mimisters, I shall be very particular in the Proof of it. And here if we weigh his Obedience or Holiness in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, we shall find

1. That it will be very flavish and felfish. Like Doeg, he will only be detained before the Lord. His Duty must be a Drudgery, and his Religion a Burden while he is not influenc'd by that Faith which works by Love, Gal. 5. 6. A prevailing and sensible Love to Jesus Christ.

And tho' his Obedience be fo bad, yet he will depend upon it for want of a *Christ* to depend upon.

2. Such a dark and deferted Believer, will also be very unthankful: And we know who hath joined unthankful and unholy together. If a Man can't call Christ his own, and realize that 'tis God who hath given his Son to him, that freely gives him all Things else, he can't be thankful for them. He that is not thankful for that Mercy of Mercies, the Lord Jesus Christ, can't be thankful for lesser Mercies: And no Man can be thankful for Jesus Christ, who doth not feel a Love to him.

3. His Obedience will be full of spiritual Pride, I have heard much of your humble doubting Christians but I never saw one yet; nor did any one else ever see one. They are meer Chimara's in Religion, certain imaginary Monsters that never were, nor indeed can be. Such as are full of Doubts, are either no Christians at all or very proud ones. 'Tis Pride and Self-sufficiency that keep Believers from an Heaven of Comfort which otherwise they could not fail of,

The high and lofty one that inhabits Eternity, will always dwell with, revive, and comfort those that are of an humble and contrite Spirit. Say-every Believer, into whose Hands this Paper may come, did you ever feel your Souls humbled to the Dust, and not taffe of Heaven at the same Time?

Just so much true Humility as any one exercises, just so much Joy will he have in the Holy Ghost. They therefore that don't feel any Joy in the Holy Ghoft don't exercise Humility. Nay a Christian that hath lost all his Joys, however demure and humble he may appear in the Eyes of Men, is always proud, fullen, and obstinate in the Sight of God. Which brings

me to fay,

4. and lastly, that fuch a Believer can't possibly repent of one of his Sins, and how a Person can maintain a Course of vital and true Holiness, without daily Repentance, is what I can't fee through. He may feel uneafy within himself, when he hath done or omitted any Thing inconsistent with Duty; he may ask God Forgiveness for Christ's Sake, and Strength against such Sins; he may be afraid to do any more so wickedly: But is this Repentance? No; God knows, and every Believer knows that this is not even gelical, but only deministrance? this is not evangelical, but only Arminian or legal Repentance. The Man feels a Stubborness and Enmity to God all the while, but doth not loath and abhor himself, without which Abasement of Soul there can be no fuch Thing as true Repentance. As he could not repent at first without a Discovery of a precious Christ, so neither can he renew his Repentance without a renewed Discovery of him.

But when God enables him to look again to him whom he hath been piercing; when he realizes that God loves him for Christ's Sake through all his Vileness as well as if he had never committed one Sin

against

against him in Thought, Word, or Deed; Oh then godly Sorrow begins to work; he loaths himself when he fees God is pacified, and can't forgive himself because God hath forgiven him. Then he is filled with an holy Self-revenge; he is ready to call himself a Beast, or a Devil for his Ingratitude; and trembles at the Thoughts of abusing again that God who is so ready to pardon all his Abuses. Those that know. all that know what Repentance unto Life means, know that these Things must needs be so: And some I trust will perceive their Hearts burn within them when they read over what they have so often felt in their own Souls. Wherefore, fince the Discovery of a pardoning God, and a precious Christ is absolutely necessary to Repentance, it is abundantly evident that a Believer in the Dark can't truly repent of one of the Sins which he daily commits, but only goes on beaping Transgression upon Sin.

But to fum up the Argument. Thus flavish, and felfish, proud, untbankful, barden'd and unrelenting is the Course of Life which the best of Menlive when their Comfort is all gone; when they go forward but it is not there; and backward, but they cannot perceive it. And yet these Guides of Souls call this a Course of vital and true Holiness! The great God who faid on another Occasion, Wilt thou call this a Fast? might justly fay to each of them on this Occasion, Wilt thou call this an hely Life? And Oh that God would cause these Divines and others that are like minded to see the Force of the Argaments I have been offering to the contrary! Would they then tell us any more of Persons living boly Lives in the Dark; and put People upon depending on fuch Lives as an Evidence of the Divine Favour, though they never had any clear Manifestations of the Love of God unto their Souls: Oh no! they would sooner burn their Hands in the Fire. than

than prophely fuch fmooth Things any more, and thereby cause poor deluded Sinners to bless themselves in their Hearts, while they are cursed of their Maker.

Thus have I finished my Remarks upon the abovementioned Book, which in the Opinion of good Judges is more adapted to destroy the Power of Godline is than the worlt Arminian Performance that ever was written. As I began them in full Assurance, that God would bless them to some of my Readers. fo my Faith hath held out to the End. Bless them O Lord God, not only to Ministers, but also and more especially to their Hearers. Since I have shewn that the most experienc'd Christians can't live holy Lives. when they have no divine Manifestations, let those who never had any clear divine Manifestations, be convinc'd that they are but strict Pharisees, and don't know what true Holiness means. And let others be convinc'd, that whatever divine Manifestations they have had (or think they have had) yet if they never were made humble and holy, and like Christ, by them, they are but rotten-hearted Hypocrites. Let a Number of those who build upon Holiness without Discoveries of Christ, and upon Discoveries of Christ, without a thorough Work of Sanctification, be beaten off from the Sand, and settled upon the Rock Jesus Christ, by Means of what I have written, and the Glory shall be thine for ever and ever, Amen.

Connecticut, Groton, Octob. 10. 1742.

A. CROSSWELL.

N. B. If any One is pleas'd to make any manner of Reply to what I have written, without telling his Name, he may expect to be taken no Notice of.

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