

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS

JONATHAN EDWARDS

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no question whatsoever, that is of greater importance to mankind, and what is more concerns every individual person to be well resolved in, than this: *What are the distinguishing qualifications of those that are in favor with God, and entitled to his eternal rewards?* Or, which comes to the same thing, *What is the nature of true religion? And wherein do lie the distinguishing notes of that virtue and holiness that is acceptable in the sight of God?* But though it be of such importance, and though we have clear and abundant light in the word of God to direct us in this matter, yet there is no one point, wherein professing Christians do more differ one from another. It would be endless to reckon up the variety of opinions in this point, that divide the Christian world; making manifest the truth of that declaration of our Savior, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few there be that find it."

The consideration of these things has long engaged me to attend to this matter, with the utmost diligence and care, and exactness of search and inquiry, that I have been capable of. It is a subject on which my mind has been peculiarly intent, ever since I first entered on the study of divinity. But as to the success of my inquiries it must be left to the judgment of the reader of the following treatise.

I am sensible it is much more difficult to judge impartially of that which is the subject of this discourse, in the midst of the dust and smoke of such a state of controversy, as this land is now in, about things of this nature. As it is more difficult to write impartially, so it is more difficult to read impartially. Many will probably be hurt in their spirits, to find so much that appertains to religious affection, here condemned: and perhaps indignation and contempt will be excited in others by finding so much here justified and approved. And it may be, some will be ready to charge me with inconsistency with myself, in so much approving some things, and so much condemning others; as I have found this has always been objected to by some, ever since the beginning of our late controversies about religion. It is a hard thing to be a hearty zealous friend of what has been good and glorious, in the late extraordinary appearances, and to rejoice much in it; and at the same time to see the evil and pernicious tendency of what has been bad, and earnestly to oppose that. But yet, I am humbly but fully persuaded, we shall never be in the way of truth, nor go on in a way acceptable to God, and tending to the advancement of Christ's kingdom till we do so. There is indeed something very mysterious in it, that so much good, and so much bad, should be mixed together in the church of God; as it is a mysterious thing, and what has puzzled and amazed many a good Christian, that there should be that which is so divine and precious, as the saving grace of God, and the new and divine nature dwelling in the same heart, with so much corruption, hypocrisy, and iniquity, in a particular saint. Yet neither of these is more mysterious than real. And neither of them is a new or rare thing. It is no new thing, that much false religion should prevail, at a time of great reviving of true religion, and that at such a time multitudes of hypocrites should spring up among true saints. It was so in that great

reformation, and revival of religion, that was in Josiah's time; as appears by Jer. 3:10, and 4:3, 4, and also by the great apostasy that there was in the land, so soon after his reign. So it was in that great outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jews, that was in the days of John the Baptist; as appears by the great apostasy of that people so soon after so general an awakening, and the temporary religious comforts and joys of many: John 5:35, "Ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." So it was in those great commotions that were among the multitude, occasioned by the preaching of Jesus Christ; of the many that were then called, but few were chosen; of the multitude that were roused and affected by his preaching, and at one time or other appeared mightily engaged, full of admiration of Christ, and elevated with joy, but few were true disciples, that stood the shock of the great trials that came afterwards, and endured to the end. Many were like the stony ground, or thorny ground; and but few, comparatively, like the good ground. Of the whole heap that was gathered, great part was chaff; that the wind afterwards drove away; and the heap of wheat that was left, was comparatively small; as appears abundantly, by the history of the New Testament. So it was in that great outpouring of the Spirit that was in the apostles' days as appears by Matt. 24:10-13. Gal. 3:1, and 4:11, 15. Phil. 2:21, and 3:18, 19, and the two epistles to the Corinthians, and many other parts of the New Testament. And so it was in the great reformation from Popery. It appears plainly to have been in the visible church of God, in times of great reviving of religion, from time to time, as it is with the fruit trees in the spring; there are a multitude of blossoms, all of which appear fair and beautiful, and there is a promising appearance of young fruits; but many of them are but of short continuance; they soon fall off, and never come to maturity.

Not that it is to be supposed that it will always be so; for though there never will, in this world, be an entire purity, either in particular saints, in a perfect freedom from mixtures of corruption; or in the church of God, without any mixture of hypocrites with saints, and counterfeit religion, and false appearances of grace with true religion, and real holiness: yet it is evident, that there will come a time of much greater purity in the church of God, than has been in ages past; it is plain by these texts of Scripture, Isa. 52:1. Ezek. 44:6, 7, Joel 3:17. Zech. 14:21. Psal. 69:32, 35, 36. Isa 35:8, 10, chap. 4:3, 4. Ezek. 20:38. Psal. 37:9, 10, 21, 29. And one great reason of it will be that at that time God will give much greater light to his people, to distinguish between true religion and its counterfeits. Mal. 3:3, "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness." With ver. 18, which is a continuation of the prophecy of the same happy times. "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."

It is by the mixture of counterfeit religion with true, not discerned and distinguished, that the devil has had his greatest advantage against the cause and kingdom of Christ, all along hitherto. It is by this means, principally, that he has prevailed against all revivings of religion, that ever have been seen the first founding of the Christian church. By this, he hurt the cause of Christianity, in and after the apostolic age, much more than by all the persecutions of both Jews and Heathens. The apostles, in all their epistles, show themselves much more concerned at the former mischief, than the latter. By this, Satan prevailed against the reformation, began by Luther. Zwinglius, &c., to put a stop to its progress, and bring it into disgrace; ten times more, than by all those bloody, cruel, and before unheard of persecutions of the church of Rome. By this, principally, has he prevailed against revivals of religion, that have been in our nation since the reformation. By this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love and spoil the joy

of her espousals, about a hundred years ago. And I think, I have had opportunity enough to see plainly that by this the devil has prevailed against the late great revival of religion in New England, so happy and promising in its beginning. Here, most evidently has been the main advantage Satan has had against us; by this he has foiled us. It is by this means, that the daughter of Zion in this land now lies on the ground, in such piteous circumstances as we now behold her; with her garments rent, her face disfigured, her nakedness exposed, her limbs broken, and weltering in the blood of her own wounds, and in no wise able to arise, and this, so quickly after her late great joys and hopes: Lam. 1:17, "Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her: the Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries shall be roundabout him: Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them." I have seen the devil prevail the same way, against two great revivings of religion in this country. Satan goes on with mankind, as he began with them. He prevailed against our first parents, and cast them out of paradise, and suddenly brought all their happiness and glory to an end, by appearing to be a friend to their happy paradisaic state, and pretending to advance it to higher degrees. So the same cunning serpent, that beguiled Eve through his subtlety, by perverting us from the simplicity that is in Christ, hath suddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair prospect, we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradisaic state of the church of God in New England.

After religion has revived in the church of God, and enemies appear, people that are engaged to defend its cause, are commonly most exposed, where they are sensible of danger. While they are wholly intent upon the opposition that appears openly before them, to make head against that, and do neglect carefully to look all around them, the devil comes behind them, and gives a fatal stab unseen; and has opportunity to give a more home stroke, and wound the deeper, because he strikes at his leisure, and according to his pleasure, being obstructed by no guard or resistance.

And so it is ever likely to be in the church, whenever religion revives remarkably, till we have learned well to distinguish between true and false religion, between saving affections and experiences, and those manifold fair shows, and glistening appearances, by which they are counterfeited; the consequences of which, when they are not distinguished, are often inexpressibly dreadful. By this means, the devil gratifies himself, by bringing it to pass, that that should be offered to God, by multitudes, under a notion of a pleasing acceptable service to him, that is indeed above all things abominable to him. By this means he deceives great multitudes about the state of their souls; making them think they are something, when they are nothing; and so eternally undoes them; and not only so, but establishes many in a strong confidence of their eminent holiness, who are in God's sight some of the vilest of hypocrites. By this means, he many ways damps and wounds religion in the hearts of the saints, obscures and deforms it by corrupt mixtures, causes their religious affections woefully to degenerate, and sometimes, for a considerable time, to be like the manna that bred worms and stank; and dreadfully ensnares and confounds the minds of others of the saints and brings them into great difficulties and temptation, and entangles them in a wilderness, out of which they can by no means extricate themselves. By this means, Satan mightily encourages the hearts of open enemies of religion, and strengthens their hands, and fills them with weapons, and makes strong their fortresses; when, at the same time, religion and the church of God lie exposed to them, as a city without walls. By this means, he brings it to pass, that men work wickedness under a notion of doing God service, and so sin without restraint, yea with earnest forwardness and zeal, any with all their might. By this means he brings in even the friends of religion, insensibly to themselves, to do the work of enemies, by destroying religion in a far more effectual manner than open enemies can do, under a notion of

advancing it. By this means the devil scatters the flock of Christ, and sets them one against another, and that with great heat of spirit, under a nation of zeal for God; and religion, by degrees degenerates into vain jangling; and during the strife, Satan leads both parties far out of the right way, driving each to great extremes, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, according as he finds they are most inclined, or most easily moved and swayed, till the right path in the middle is almost wholly neglected. And in the midst of this confusion, the devil has great opportunity to advance his own interest, and make it strong in ways innumerable, and get the government of all into his own hands and work his own will. And by what is seen of the terrible consequences of this counterfeit religion, when not distinguished from true religion, God's people in general have their minds unhinged and unsettled in things of religion, and know not where to set their foot, or what to think or do; and many are brought into doubts, whether there be anything in religion; and heresy, and infidelity, and atheism greatly prevail.

Therefore it greatly concerns us to use our utmost endeavors clearly to discern, and have it well settled and established, wherein true religion does consist. Till this be done, it may be expected, that great revivings of religion will be but of short continuance; till this be done, there is but little good to be expected of all our warm debates in conversation and from the press, not knowing clearly and distinctly what we ought to contend for.

My design is to contribute my mite, and use my best (however feeble) endeavors to this end, in the ensuing treatise; wherein it must be noted, that my design is somewhat diverse from the design of what I have formerly published, which was to show *the distinguishing marks of a work of the Spirit of God*, including both his common and saving operations; but what I aim at now, is to show the nature and signs of the *gracious operations* of God's Spirit, by which they are to be distinguished from all things whatsoever, that the minds of men are the subjects of, which are not of a saving nature. If I have succeeded, in this my aim, in any tolerable measure, I hope it will tend to promote the interest of religion. And whether I have succeeded to bring any light to this subject or no, and however my attempts may be reproached in these captious and censorious times, I hope in the mercy of a gracious God, for the acceptance of the sincerity of my endeavors; and hope also for the candor and prayers of the true followers of the meek and charitable Lamb of God.

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I. It may be inquired, what the affections of the mind are?

I answer: The affections are no other than the more vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and will of the soul.

God has endued the soul with two faculties: one is that by which it is capable of perception and speculation, or by which it discerns, and views, and judges of things; which is called the understanding. The other faculty is that by which the soul does not merely perceive and view

things, but is some way inclined with respect to the things it views or considers; either is inclined *to* them, or is disinclined and averse *from* them; or is the faculty by which the soul does not behold things, as an indifferent unaffected spectator, but either as liking or disliking, pleased or displeased, approving or rejecting. This faculty is called by various names; it is sometimes called the *inclination*: and, as it has respect to the actions that are determined and governed by it, is called the *will*: and the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, is often called the *heart*.

The exercise of this faculty are of two sorts; either those by which the soul is carried out towards the things that are in view, in approving of them, being pleased with them, and inclined to them; or those in which the soul opposes the things that are in view, in disapproving of them, and in being displeased with them, averse from them, and rejecting them.

And as the exercises of the inclination and will of the soul are various in their kinds, so they are much more various in their degrees. There are some exercises of pleasedness or displeasedness, inclination or disinclination, wherein the soul is carried but a little beyond the state of indifference.--And there are other degrees above this, wherein the approbation or dislike, pleasedness or aversion, are stronger, wherein we may rise higher and higher, till the soul comes to act vigorously and sensibly, and the actings of the soul are with that strength, that (through the laws of the union which the Creator has fixed between the soul and the body) the motion of the blood and animal spirits begins to be sensibly altered; whence oftentimes arises some bodily sensation, especially about the heart and vitals, that are the fountain of the fluids of the body: from whence it comes to pass, that the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, perhaps in all nations and ages, is called the *heart*. And it is to be noted, that they are these more vigorous and sensible exercises of this faculty that are called the *affections*.

The will, and the affections of the soul, are not two faculties; the affections are not essentially distinct from the will, nor do they differ from the mere actings of the will, and inclination of the soul, but only in the liveliness and sensibleness of exercise.

It must be confessed, that language is here somewhat imperfect, and the meaning of words in a considerable measure loose and unfixed, and not precisely limited by custom, which governs the use of language. In some sense, the affection of the soul differs nothing at all from the will and inclination, and the will never is in any exercise any further than it is affected; it is not moved out of a state of perfect indifference, any otherwise than as it is affected one way or other, and acts nothing any further. But yet there are many actings of the will and inclination, that are not so commonly called *affections*: in everything we do, wherein we act voluntarily, there is an exercise of the will and inclination; it is our inclination that governs us in our actions; but all the actings of the inclination and will, in all our common actions of life, are not ordinarily called affections. Yet, what are commonly called affections are not essentially different from them, but only in the degree and manner of exercise. In every act of the will whatsoever, the soul either likes or dislikes, is either inclined or disinclined to what is in view: these are not essentially different from those affections of love and hatred: that liking or inclination of the soul to a thing, if it be in a high degree, and be vigorous and lively, is the very same thing with the affection of love; and that disliking and disinclining, if in a greater degree, is the very same with hatred. In every act of the will for, or towards something not present, the soul is in some degree inclined to that thing; and that inclination, if in a considerable degree, is the very same with the affection of desire. And in every degree of the act of the will, wherein the soul approves of something present, there is a

degree of pleasedness; and that pleasedness, if it be in a considerable degree, is the very same with the affections of joy or delight. And if the will disapproves of what is present, the soul is in some degree displeased, and if that displeasedness be great, it is the very same with the affection of grief or sorrow.

Such seems to be our nature, and such the laws of the union of soul and body, that there never is in any case whatsoever, any lively and vigorous exercise of the will or inclination of the soul, without some effect upon the body, in some alteration of the motion of its fluids, and especially of the animal spirits. And, on the other hand, from the same laws of the union of the soul and body, the constitution of the body, and the motion of its fluids, may promote the exercise of the affections. But yet it is not the body, but the mind only, that is the proper seat of the affections. The body of man is no more capable of being really the subject of love or hatred, joy or sorrow, fear or hope, than the body of a tree, or than the same body of man is capable of thinking and understanding. As it is the soul only that has ideas, so it is the soul only that is pleased or displeased with its ideas. As it is the soul only that thinks, so it is the soul only that loves or hates, rejoices or is grieved at what it thinks of. Nor are these motions of the animal spirits, and fluids of the body, anything properly belonging to the nature of the affections, though they always accompany them, in the present state; but are only effects or concomitants of the affections that are entirely distinct from the affections themselves, and no way essential to them; so that an unbodied spirit may be as capable of love and hatred, joy or sorrow, hope or fear, or other affections, as one that is united to a body.

The affections and passions are frequently spoken of as the same; and yet in the more common use of speech, there is in some respect a difference; and affection is a word that in its ordinary signification, seems to be something more extensive than passion, being used for all vigorous lively actings of the will or inclination; but passion for those that are more sudden, and whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, and the mind more overpowered, and less in its own command.

As all the exercises of the inclination and will, are either in approving and liking, or disapproving and rejecting; so the affections are of two sorts; they are those by which the soul is carried out to what is in view, cleaving to it, or seeking it; or those by which it is averse from it, and opposes it.

Of the former sort are love, desire, hope, joy, gratitude, complacence. Of the latter kind are hatred, fear, anger, grief, and such like; which it is needless now to stand particularly to define.

And there are some affections wherein there is a composition of each of the aforementioned kinds of actings of the will; as in the affection of *pity*, there is something of the former kind, towards the person suffering, and something of the latter towards what he suffers. And so in zeal, there is in it high approbation of some person or thing, together with vigorous opposition to what is conceived to be contrary to it.

There are other mixed affections that might be also mentioned, but I hasten to,

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I. It is no sign one way or the other, that religious affections are very great, or raised very high.

Some are ready to condemn all high affections: if persons appear to have their religious affections raised to an extraordinary pitch, they are prejudiced against them, and determine that they are delusions, without further inquiry. But if it be, as has been proved, that true religion lies very much in religious affections, then it follows, that if there be a great deal of true religion, there will be great religious affections; if true religion in the hearts of men be raised to a great height, divine and holy affections will be raised to a great height.

Love is an affection, but will any Christian say, men ought not to love God and Jesus Christ in a high degree? And will any say, we ought not to have a very great hatred of sin, and a very deep sorrow for it? Or that we ought not to exercise a high degree of gratitude to God for the mercies we receive of him, and the great things he has done for the salvation of fallen men? Or that we should not have very great and strong desires after God and holiness? Is there any who will profess, that his affections in religion are great enough; and will say, "I have no cause to be humbled, that I am no more affected with the things of religion than I am; I have no reason to be ashamed, that I have no greater exercises of love to God and sorrow for sin, and gratitude for the mercies which I have received?" Who is there that will bless God that he is affected enough with what he has read and heard of the wonderful love of God to worms and rebels, in giving his only begotten Son to die for them, and of the dying love of Christ; and will pray that he may not be affected with them in any higher degree, because high affections are improper and very unlovely in Christians, being enthusiastical, and ruinous to true religion?

Our text plainly speaks of great and high affections when it speaks of "repining with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:" here the most superlative expressions are used, which language will afford. And the Scriptures often require us to exercise very high affections: thus in the first and great commandment of the law, there is an accumulation of expressions, as though words were wanting to express the degree in which we ought to love God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." So the saints are called upon to exercise high degrees of joy: "Rejoice," says Christ to his disciples, "and be exceeding glad," Matt. 5:12. So it is said, Psalm 68:3, "Let the righteous be glad: let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice." So in the book of Psalms, the saints are often called upon to shout for joy; and in Luke 6:23, to leap for joy. So they are abundantly called upon to exercise high degrees of gratitude for mercies, to "praise God with all their hearts, with hearts lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and their souls magnifying the Lord, singing his praises, talking of his wondrous works, declaring his doings, &c."

And we find the most eminent saints in Scripture often professing high affections. Thus the

Psalmist speaks of his love, as if it were unspeakable; Psal. 119:97, "O how love I thy law!" So he expresses a great degree of hatred of sin, Psal. 139:21, 29: "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred." He also expresses a high degree of sorrow for sin: he speaks of his sins "going over his head as a heavy burden that was too heavy for him: and of his roaring all the day, and his moisture being turned into the drought of summer," and his bones being as it were broken with sorrow. So he often expresses great degrees of spiritual desires, in a multitude of the strongest expressions which can be conceived of; such as "his longing, his soul's thirsting as a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, his panting, his flesh and heart crying out, his soul's breaking for the longing it hath," &c. He expresses the exercises of great and extreme grief for the sins of others, Psal. 119:136, "Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." And verse 53, "Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law." He expresses high exercises of joy, Psal. 21:1: "The king shall joy in thy strength, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice." Psal. 71:23 "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee." Psal. 63:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, "Because thy loving kindness is better than life; my lips shall praise thee, Thus will I bless thee, while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help; therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

The Apostle Paul expresses high exercises of affection. Thus he expresses the exercises of pity and concern for others' good, even to anguish of heart; a great, fervent, and abundant love, and earnest and longing desires, and exceeding joy; and speaks of the exultation and triumphs of his soul, and his earnest expectation and hope, and his abundant tears, and the travails of his soul, in pity, grief, earnest desires, godly jealousy, and fervent zeal, in many places that have been cited already, and which therefore I need not repeat. John the Baptist expressed great joy, John 3:39. Those blessed women that anointed the body of Jesus, are represented as in a very high exercise of religious affection, on occasion of Christ's resurrection, Matt. 28:8: "And they departed from the sepulcher with fear and great joy."

It is often foretold of the church of God, in her future happy seasons here on earth, that they shall exceedingly rejoice: Psal. 89:15, 16, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Zech. 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh," &c. The same is represented in innumerable other places. And because high degrees of joy are the proper and genuine fruits of the gospel of Christ, therefore the angel calls this gospel, "good tidings of great joy, that should be to all people."

The saints and angels in heaven, that have religion in its highest perfection, are exceedingly affected with what they behold and contemplate of God's perfections and works. They are all as a pure heavenly flame of fire in their love and in the greatness and strength of their joy and gratitude: their praises are represented, "as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder." Now the only reason why their affections are so much higher than the holy affections of saints on earth, is, they see the things they are affected by, more according to their truth, and have their affections more conformed to the nature of things. And therefore, if religious affections in men here below, are but of the same nature and kind with theirs, the higher they are, and the nearer they are to theirs in degree, the better, because therein they will be so much the

more conformed to truth, as theirs are.

From these things it certainly appears, that religious affections being in a very high degree, is no evidence that they are not such as have the nature of true religion. Therefore they do greatly err, who condemn persons as enthusiasts merely because their affections are very high.

And on the other hand, it is no evidence that religious affections are of a spiritual and gracious nature, because they are great. It is very manifest by the holy Scripture, our sure and infallible rule to judge of things of this nature, that there are religious affections which are very high, that are not spiritual and saving. The Apostle Paul speaks of affections in the Galatians, which had been exceedingly elevated, and which yet he manifestly speaks of, as fearing that they were vain, and had come to nothing: Gal. 4:15, "Where is the blessedness you spoke of? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." And in the 11th verse, he tells them, "he was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed upon them labor in vain." So the children of Israel were greatly affected with God's mercy to them, when they had seen how wonderfully he wrought for them at the Red Sea, where they sang God's praise; though they soon forgot his works. So they were greatly affected again at mount Sinai, when they saw the marvelous manifestations God made of himself there; and seemed mightily engaged in their minds, and with great forwardness made answer, when God proposed his holy covenant to them, saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient." But how soon was there an end to all this mighty forwardness and engagedness of affection! How quickly were they turned aside after other gods, rejoicing and shouting around their golden calf! So great multitudes who were affected with the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead, were elevated to a high degree, and made a mighty ado, when Jesus presently after entered into Jerusalem, exceedingly magnifying Christ, as though the ground were not good enough for the ass he rode to tread upon; and therefore cut branches of palm trees, and strewed them in the way; yea, pulled off their garments, and spread them in the way; and cried with loud voices, "Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest;" so as to make the whole city ring again, and put all into an uproar. We learn by the evangelist John, that the reason why the people made this ado, was because they were affected with the miracle of raising Lazarus, John 12:18. Here was a vast multitude crying Hosanna on this occasion, so that it gave occasion to the Pharisees to say, "Behold, the world has gone after him," John 12:19, but Christ had at that time but few true disciples. And how quickly was this ado at an end! All of this nature is quelled and dead, when this Jesus stands bound, with a mock robe and a crown of thorns, to be derided, spit upon, scourged, condemned and executed. Indeed, there was a great and loud outcry concerning him among the multitude then, as well as before; but of a very different kind: it is not then, Hosanna, hosanna, but Crucify, crucify.

And it is the concurring voice of all orthodox divines, that there may be religious affections, which are raised to a very high degree, and yet there be nothing of true religion.[\[1\]](#)

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VI. It is no evidence that religious affections are saving, or that they are otherwise, that there is an appearance of love in them.

There are no professing Christians who pretend, that this is an argument against the truth and saving nature of religious affections. But, on the other hand, there are some who suppose, it is a good evidence that affections are from the sanctifying and saving influences of the Holy Ghost.-- Their argument is that Satan cannot love; this affection being directly contrary to the devil, whose very nature is enmity and malice. And it is true, that nothing is more excellent, heavenly, and divine, than a spirit of true Christian love to God and men: it is more excellent than knowledge, or prophecy, or miracles, or speaking with the tongue of men and angels. It is the chief of the graces of God's Spirit, and the life, essence and sum of all true religion; and that by which we are most conformed to heaven, and most contrary to hell and the devil. But yet it is in arguing from hence, that there are no counterfeits of it. It may be observed that the more excellent anything is, the more will be the counterfeits of it. Thus there are many more counterfeits of silver and gold, than of iron and copper: there are many false diamonds and rubies, but who goes about to counterfeit common stones? Though the more excellent things are, the more difficult it is to make anything that shall be like them, in their essential nature and internal virtues; yet the more manifold will the counterfeits be, and the more will art and subtlety be displayed, in an exact imitation of the outward appearance. Thus there is the greatest danger of being cheated in buying of medicines that are most excellent and sovereign, though it be most difficult to imitate them with anything of the like value and virtue, and their counterfeits are good for nothing when we have them. So it is with Christian virtues and graces; the subtlety of Satan, and men's deceitful hearts, are wont chiefly to be exercised in counterfeiting those that are in highest repute. So there are perhaps no graces that have more counterfeits than love and humility; these being virtues wherein the beauty of a true Christian does especially appear.

But with respect to love; it is plain by the Scripture, that persons may have a kind of religious love, and yet have no saving grace. Christ speaks of many professing Christians that have such love, whose love will not continue, and so shall fail of salvation, Matt. 24:12, 13: "And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Which latter words plainly show, that those spoken of before, whose love shall not endure to the end, but wax cold, should not be saved.

Persons may seem to have love to God and Christ, yea, to have very strong and violent affections of this nature, and yet have no grace. For this was evidently the case with many graceless Jews, such as cried Jesus up so high, following him day and night, without meat, drink, or sleep; such as said, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," and cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David."[\[19\]](#)

The apostle seems to intimate, that there were many in his days who had a counterfeit love to Christ, in Eph. 6:24: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The last word, in the original, signifies *incorruption*; which shows, that the apostle was sensible that there were many who had a kind of love to Christ, whose love was not pure and spiritual.

So also Christian love to the people of God may be counterfeited. It is evident by the Scripture, that there may be strong affections of this kind, without saving grace; as there were in the Galatians towards the Apostle Paul, when they were ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to him; although the apostle expresses his fear that their affections were come to nothing, and that he had bestowed upon them labor in vain, Gal. 4:11, 15.

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS

JONATHAN EDWARDS

RTFTToC26

I. Affections that are truly spiritual and gracious, do arise from those influences and operations on the heart, which are spiritual, supernatural and divine.

I will explain what I mean by these terms, whence will appear their use to distinguish between those affections which are spiritual, and those which are not so.

We find that true saints, or those persons who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, are in the New Testament called spiritual persons. And their being spiritual is spoken of as their peculiar character, and that wherein they are distinguished from those who are not sanctified. This is evident, because those who are spiritual are set in opposition to natural men, and carnal men. Thus the spiritual man and the natural man are set in opposition one to another, 1 Cor. 2:14, 15: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." The Scripture explains itself to mean an ungodly man, or one that has no grace, by a natural man: thus the Apostle Jude, speaking of certain ungodly men, that had crept in unawares among the saints, ver. 4, of his epistle, says, 5:19, "These are sensual, having not the Spirit." This the apostle gives as a reason why they behaved themselves in such a wicked manner as he had described. Here the word translated *sensual*, is the very same as that which in those verses in 1 Cor. chap. 2 is translated *natural*. In the like manner, in the continuation of the same discourse, in the next verse but one, spiritual men are opposed to carnal men; which the connection plainly shows mean the same, as spiritual men and natural men, in the foregoing verses; "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal;" i.e., as in a great measure unsanctified. That by carnal the apostle means corrupt and unsanctified, is abundantly evident, by Rom. 7:25, and 8:1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 19, 13, Gal. 5:16, to the end, Col. 2:18. Now therefore, if by natural and carnal in these texts, be intended unsanctified, then doubtless by spiritual, which is opposed thereto, is meant sanctified and gracious.

And as the saints are called spiritual in Scripture, so we also find that there are certain properties, qualities, and principles, that have the same epithet given them. So we read of a "spiritual mind," Rom. 8:6, 7, and of "spiritual wisdom," Col. 1:9, and of "spiritual blessings," Eph. 1:3.

Now it may be observed, that the epithet *spiritual*, in these and other parallel texts of the New Testament, is not used to signify any relation of persons or things to the spirit or soul of man, as the spiritual part of man, in opposition to the body, which is the material part. Qualities are not said to be spiritual, because they have their seat in the soul, and not in the body: for there are some properties that the Scripture calls *carnal* or *fleshly*, which have their seat as much in the soul, as those properties that are called *spiritual*. Thus it is with pride and self-righteousness, and a man's trusting to his own wisdom, which the apostle calls *fleshly*, Col. 2:18. Nor are things called spiritual, because they are conversant about those things that are immaterial, and not corporeal. For so was the wisdom of the wise men, and princes of this world, conversant about spirits, and immaterial beings; which yet the apostle speaks of as natural men, totally ignorant of those things that are spiritual, 1 Cor. chap. 2. But it is with relation to the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, that persons or things are termed spiritual in the New Testament. Spirit, as the word is used to signify the third person in the Trinity, is the substantive, of which is formed the adjective spiritual, in the holy Scriptures. Thus Christians are called spiritual persons, because they are born of the Spirit, and because of the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in them. And things are called spiritual as related to the Spirit of God; 1 Cor. 2:13, 14, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Here the apostle himself expressly signifies, that by spiritual things, he means the things of the Spirit of God, and things which the Holy Ghost teacheth. The same is yet more abundantly apparent by viewing the whole context. Again, Rom. 8:6, "To be carnally minded, is death; to be spiritually minded, is life and peace" The apostle explains what he means by being carnally and spiritually minded in what follows in the 9th verse, and shows that by being spiritually minded, he means a having the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in the heart: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, it so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The same is evident by all the context. But time would fail to produce all the evidence there is of this, in the New Testament.

And it must be here observed, that although it is with relation to the Spirit of God and his influences, that persons and things are called spiritual; yet not all those persons who are subject to any kind of influence of the Spirit of God, are ordinarily called spiritual in the New Testament. They who have only the common influences of God's Spirit, are not so called, in the places cited above, but only those who have the special, gracious, and saving influences of God's Spirit; as is evident, because it has been already proved, that by spiritual men is meant godly men, in opposition to natural, carnal, and unsanctified men. And it is most plain, that the apostle by spiritually minded, Rom. 8:6, means graciously minded. And though the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which natural men might have, are sometimes called spiritual, because they are from the Spirit; yet natural men, whatever gifts of the Spirit they had, were not, in the usual language of the New Testament, called spiritual persons. For it was not by men's having the gifts of the Spirit, but by their having the virtues of the Spirit, that they were called spiritual; as is apparent by Gal. 6:1: "Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." Meekness is one of those virtues which the apostle had just spoken of, in the verses next preceding, showing what are the fruits of the Spirit. Those

qualifications are said to be spiritual in the language of the New Testament, which are truly gracious and holy, and peculiar to the saints.

Thus, when we read of spiritual wisdom and understanding (as in Col. 1:9, "We desire that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"), hereby is intended that wisdom which is gracious, and from the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. For, doubtless, by spiritual wisdom is meant that which is opposite to what the Scripture calls natural wisdom; as the spiritual man is opposed to the natural man. And therefore spiritual wisdom is doubtless the same with that wisdom which is from above, that the Apostle James speaks of, Jam. 3:17: "The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle," &c., for this the apostle opposes to natural wisdom, ver. 15: "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual"--the last word in the original is the same that is translated *natural*, in 1 Cor. 2:14.

So that although natural men may be the subjects of many influences of the Spirit of God, as is evident by many Scriptures, as Numb. 24:2, 1 Sam. 10:10, and 11:6, and 16:14, 1 Cor. 13:1, 2, 3, Heb. 6:4, 5, 6, and many others; yet they are not, in the sense of the Scripture, spiritual persons; neither are any of those effects, common gifts, qualities, or affections, that are from the influence of the Spirit of God upon them, called spiritual things. The great difference lies in these two things.

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS

JONATHAN EDWARDS

RTFToC31

VI. Gracious affections are attended with evangelical humiliation. Evangelical humiliation is a sense that a Christian has of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, with an answerable frame of heart.

There is a distinction to be made between a legal and evangelical humiliation. The former is what men may be the subjects of, while they are yet in a state of nature, and have no gracious affections; the latter is peculiar to true saints: the former is from the common influence of the Spirit of God, assisting natural principles, and especially natural conscience; the latter is from the special influences of the Spirit of God, implanting and exercising supernatural and divine principles: the former is from the mind's being assisted to a greater sense of the things of religion, as to their natural properties and qualities, and particularly of the natural perfections of God, such as his greatness, terrible majesty, &c., which were manifested to the congregation of Israel, in giving the law at mount Sinai; the latter is from a sense of the transcendent beauty of divine things in their moral qualities: in the former, a sense of the awful greatness, and natural perfections of God, and of the strictness of his law, convinces men that they are exceeding sinful, and guilty, and exposed to the wrath of God, as it will wicked men and devils at the day of judgment; but they do not see their own odiousness on the account of sin; they do not see the

hateful nature of sin; a sense of this is given in evangelical humiliation, by a discovery of the beauty of God's holiness and moral perfection. In a legal humiliation, men are made sensible that they are little and nothing before the great and terrible God, and that they are undone, and wholly insufficient to help themselves; as wicked men will be at the day of judgment: but they have not an answerable frame of heart, consisting in a disposition to abase themselves, and exalt God alone; this disposition is given only in evangelical humiliation, by overcoming the heart, and changing its inclination, by a discovery of God's holy beauty: in a legal humiliation, the conscience is convinced; as the consciences of all will be most perfectly at the day of judgment; but because there is no spiritual understanding, the will is not bowed, nor the inclination altered: this is done only in evangelical humiliation. In legal humiliation, men are brought to despair of helping themselves; in evangelical, they are brought voluntarily to deny and renounce themselves: in the former, they are subdued and forced to the ground; in the latter, they are brought sweetly to yield, and freely and with delight to prostrate themselves at the feet of God.

Legal humiliation has in it no spiritual good, nothing of the nature of true virtue; whereas evangelical humiliation is that wherein the excellent beauty of Christian grace does very much consist. Legal humiliation is useful, as a means in order to evangelical; as a common knowledge of the things of religion is a means requisite in order to spiritual knowledge. Men may be legally humbled and have no humility: as the wicked at the day of judgment will be thoroughly convinced that they have no righteousness, but are altogether sinful, and exceedingly guilty, and justly exposed to eternal damnation, and be fully sensible of their own helplessness, without the least mortification of the pride of their hearts: but the essence of evangelical humiliation consists in such humility, as becomes a creature, in itself exceeding sinful, under a dispensation of grace; consisting in a mean esteem of himself, as in himself nothing, and altogether contemptible and odious; attended with a mortification of a disposition to exalt himself, and a free renunciation of his own glory.

This is a great and most essential thing in true religion. The whole frame of the gospel, and everything appertaining to the new covenant, and all God's dispensations towards fallen man, are calculated to bring to pass this effect in the hearts of men. They that are destitute of this, have no true religion, whatever profession they may make, and how high soever their religious affections may be: Hab. 2:4, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith;" i.e., he shall live by his faith on God's righteousness and grace, and not his own goodness and excellency. God has abundantly manifested in his word, that this is what he has a peculiar respect to in his saints, and that nothing is acceptable to him without it. Psalm 34:18, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalm 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalm 138:6, "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." Prov. 3:34, "He giveth grace unto the lowly." Isa. 57:15, "Thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. 66:1, 2, "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Micah 6:8, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee; but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Matt. 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of God." Matt. 18:3, 4, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not

enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Mark 10:15, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." The centurion, that we have an account of, Luke 7, acknowledged that he was not worthy that Christ should enter under his roof, and that he was not worthy to come to him. See the manner of the woman's coming to Christ, that was a sinner, Luke 7:37, &c.: "And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head." She did not think the hair of her head, which is the natural crown and glory of a woman (1 Cor. 11:15), too good to wipe the feet of Christ withal. Jesus most graciously accepted her, and says to her, "thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." The woman of Canaan submitted to Christ, in his saying, "it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs," and did as it were own that she was worthy to be called a dog; whereupon Christ says unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee, even as thou wilt," Matt. 15:26, 27, 28. The prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants," Luke 15:18, &c. See also Luke 18:9, &c.: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, &c. The publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." Matt. 23:12, "And they came, and held him by the feet and worshipped him." Col. 3:12, "Put ye on, as the elect of God, humbleness of mind." Ezek. 20:41, 42, "I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, &c. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for all your evils that ye have committed." Chap. 36:26, 27, 31, "A new heart also will I give unto you--and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, &c. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations." Chap. 16:63, "That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord." Job 42:6, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

As we would therefore make the holy Scriptures our rule in judging of the nature of true religion, and judging of our own religious qualifications and state; it concerns us greatly to look at this humiliation, as one of the most essential things pertaining to true Christianity.[\[56\]](#) This is the principal part of the great Christian duty of self-denial. That duty consists in two things, viz., *first*, in a man's denying his worldly inclinations, and in forsaking and renouncing all worldly objects and enjoyments; and, *secondly*, in denying his natural self-exaltation, and renouncing his own dignity and glory and in being emptied of himself; so that he does freely and from his very heart, as it were renounce himself, and annihilate himself. Thus the Christian doth in evangelical humiliation. And this latter is the greatest and most difficult part of self-denial: although they always go together, and one never truly is, where the other is not; yet natural men can come much nearer to the former than the latter. Many Anchorites and Recluses have abandoned (though without any true mortification) the wealth, and pleasures, and common enjoyments of the world, who were far from renouncing their own dignity and righteousness; they never denied

themselves for Christ, but only sold one lust to feed another, sold a beastly lust to pamper a devilish one; and so were never the better, but their latter end was worse than their beginning; they turned out one black devil, to let in seven white ones, that were worse than the first, though of a fairer countenance. It is inexpressible, and almost inconceivable, how strong a self-righteous, self-exalting disposition is naturally in man; and what he will not do and suffer to feed and gratify it: and what lengths have been gone in a seeming self-denial in other respects, by Essenes and Pharisees among the Jews, and by Papists, many sects of heretics, and enthusiasts, among professing Christians; and by many Mahometans; and by Pythagorean philosophers, and others among the Heathen; and all to do sacrifice to this Moloch of spiritual pride or self-righteousness; and that they may have something wherein to exalt themselves before God, and above their fellow creatures.

That humiliation which has been spoken of, is what all the most glorious hypocrites, who make the most splendid show of mortification to the world, and high religious affection, do grossly fail in. Were it not that this is so much insisted on in Scripture, as a most essential thing in true grace, one would be tempted to think that many of the heathen philosophers were truly gracious, in whom was so bright an appearance of many virtues, and also great illuminations, and inward fervors and elevations of mind, as though they were truly the subjects of divine illapses and heavenly communications.[\[57\]](#) It is true, that many hypocrites make great pretenses to humility, as well as other graces; and very often there is nothing whatsoever which they make a higher profession of. They endeavor to make a great show of humility in speech and behavior; but they commonly make bungling work of it, though glorious work in their own eyes. They cannot find out what a humble speech and behavior is, or how to speak and act so that there may indeed be a savor of Christian humility in what they say and do: that sweet humble air and mien is beyond their art, being not led by the Spirit, or naturally guided to a behavior becoming holy humility, by the vigor of a lowly spirit within them. And therefore they have no other way, many of them, but only to be much in declaring that they be humble, and telling how they were humbled to the dust at such and such times, and abounding in very bad expressions which they use about themselves; such as, "I am the least of all saints, I am a poor vile creature, I am not worthy of the least mercy, or that God should look upon me! Oh, I have a dreadful wicked heart! My heart is worse than the devil! Oh, this cursed heart of mine," &c. Such expressions are very often used, not with a heart that is broken, not with spiritual mourning, not with the tears of her that washed Jesus's feet, not as "remembering and being confounded, and never opening their mouth more because of their shame, when God is pacified," as the expression is, Ezek. 16:63, but with a light air, with smiles in the countenance, or with a pharisaical affectation: and we must believe that they are thus humble, and see themselves so vile, upon the credit of their say so; for there is nothing appears in them of any savor of humility, in the manner of their deportment and deeds that they do. There are many that are full of expressions of their own vileness, who yet expect to be looked upon as eminent and bright saints by others, as their due; and it is dangerous for any, so much as to hint the contrary, or to carry it towards them any otherwise, than as if we looked upon them as some of the chief of Christians. There are many that are much in crying out of their wicked hearts, and their great short comings, and unprofitableness, and speaking as though they looked on themselves as the meanest of the saints; who yet, if a minister should seriously tell them the same things in private, and should signify, that he feared they were very low and weak Christians, and thought they had reason solemnly to consider of their great barrenness and unprofitableness, and falling so much short of many others, it would be more than they could digest; they would think themselves highly injured; and there would be a danger of a rooted prejudice in them against

such a minister.

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS

JONATHAN EDWARDS

RTFToC39

Secondly, I proceed to show, that Christian practice, taken in the sense that has been explained, is the chief of all the evidences of a saving sincerity in religion, to the consciences of the professors of it; much to be preferred to the method of the first convictions, enlightenings, and comforts in conversion, or any immanent discoveries or exercises of grace whatsoever, that begin and end in contemplation. [79] The evidence of this appears by the following arguments.

ARGUMENT I. -- Reason plainly shows, that those things which put it to the proof what men will actually cleave to and prefer in their practice, when left to follow their own choice and inclinations, are the proper trial what they do really prefer in their hearts. Sincerity in religion, as has been observed already, consists in setting God highest in the heart, in choosing him before other things, in having a heart to sell all for Christ, &c. But a man's actions are the proper trial what a man's heart prefers. As for instance, when it is so that God and other things come to stand in competition, God is as it were set before a man on one hand, and his worldly interest or pleasure on the other (as it often is so in the course of a man's life); his behavior in such case, in actually cleaving to the one and forsaking the other, is the proper trial which he prefers. Sincerity consists in forsaking all for Christ in heart; but to forsake all for Christ in heart, is the very same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ; but certainly the proper trial whether a man has a heart to forsake all for Christ is his being actually put to it, the having Christ and other things coming in competition, that he must actually or practically cleave to one and forsake the other. To forsake all for Christ in heart, is the same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ when called to it: but the highest proof to ourselves and others, that we have a heart to forsake all for Christ when called to it, is actually doing it when called to it, or so far as called to it. To follow Christ in heart is to have a heart to follow him. To deny ourselves in heart for Christ, is the same thing as to have a heart to deny ourselves for him in fact. The main and most proper proof of a man's having a heart to any thing, concerning which he is at liberty to follow his own inclinations, and either to do or not to do as he pleases, is his doing of it. When a man is at liberty whether to speak or keep silence, the most proper evidence of his having a heart to speak, is his speaking. When a man is at liberty whether to walk or sit still, the proper proof of his having a heart to walk, is his walking. Godliness consists not in a heart to intend to do the will of God, but in a heart to do it. The children of Israel in the wilderness had the former, of whom we read, Deut. 5:27, 28, 29, "Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; they have

well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" The people manifested that they had a heart to intend to keep God's commandments, and to be very forward in those intentions; but God manifests, that this was far from being the thing that he desired, wherein true godliness consists, even a heart actually to keep them.

It is therefore exceedingly absurd, and even ridiculous, for any to pretend that they have a good heart, while they live a wicked life, or do not bring forth the fruit of universal holiness in their practice. For it is proved in fact, that such men do not love God above all. It is foolish to dispute against plain fact and experience. Men that live in ways of sin, and yet flatter themselves that they shall go to heaven, or expect to be received hereafter as holy persons, without a holy practice, act as though they expected to make a fool of their Judge. Which is implied in what the apostle says (speaking of men's doing good works and living a holy life, thereby exhibiting evidence of their title to everlasting life), Gal. 6:7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As much as to say, "Do not deceive yourselves with an expectation of reaping life everlasting hereafter, if you do not sow to the Spirit here; it is in vain to think that God will be made a fool of by you, that he will be shammed and baffled with shadows instead of substances, and with vain pretense, instead of that good fruit which he expects, when the contrary to what you pretend appears plainly in your life, before his face." In this manner the word *mock* is sometimes used in Scripture. Thus Delilah says to Sampson, "behold thou hast mocked me, and told me lies." Judges 16:10, 13; i.e., "Thou hast baffled me, as though you would have made a fool of me, as if I might be easily turned off with any vain pretense, instead of the truth." So it is said that Lot, when he told his sons in law that God would destroy that place, "he seemed as one that mocked, to his sons in law," Gen. 19:14; i.e., he seemed as one that would make a game of them, as though they were such credulous fools as to regard such bugbears. But the great Judge, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, will not be mocked or baffled with any pretenses, without a holy life. If in his name men have prophesied and wrought miracles, and have had faith, so that they could remove mountains, and cast out devils, and however high their religious affections have been, however great resemblances they have had of grace, and though their hiding-place has been so dark and deep, that no human skill nor search could find them out, yet if they are workers or practicers of iniquity, they cannot hide their hypocrisy from their Judge: Job 34:22, there is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." Would a wise prince suffer himself to be fooled and baffled by a subject, who should pretend that he was a loyal subject, and should tell his prince that he had an entire affection to him, and that at such and such a time he had experience of it, and felt his affections strongly working towards him, and should come expecting to be accepted and rewarded by his prince, as one of his best friends on that account, though he lived in rebellion against him, following some pretender to his crown, and from time to time stirring up sedition against him? Or would a master suffer himself to be shammed and gulled by a servant, that should pretend to great experiences of love and honor towards him in his heart, and a great sense of his worthiness and kindness to him, when at the same time he refused to obey him, and he could get no service done by him?
