

The Christian in Complete Armour - Part 17

by William Gurnall

William Gurnall emphasizes the necessity of praying in the Spirit with knowledge, fervency, and sincerity for effective communication with God.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 1:18, Ephesians 6:18, Jude 1:20

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Holy Spirit"

Description

William Gurnall preaches about the importance of praying 'in the Spirit,' highlighting the need to pray with both the spirit of the person praying and the Spirit of God. He emphasizes that true prayer involves praying with knowledge, fervency, and sincerity, and that it must come from a pure heart with pure intentions. Gurnall warns against hypocrisy in prayer, urging believers to be genuine and wholehearted in their communication with God.

Transcript

Division Third. The Inward Principle of Prayer.

In the Spirit.

We are come to the third division in the apostles directory for prayer the principle or spring from whence they are to flow the Spirit, praying...in the Spirit. In proceeding to the consideration of this topic, the first point is that which will be determined by the solution of the following question, viz:

Question. What is it to pray in the Spirit?

Answer. Interpreters generally comprehend in this phrase both the spirit of the person praying, and the Spirit of God, by which our spirits are fitted for and acted in prayer. Est oratio in spiritu, nempe et nostro quo oramus, et Spiritu Sancto per quem oramus (so Zanch. in loc) that is a prayer in the spirit, which, by the help of the Holy Spirit, is performed with our soul and spirit. These two indeed go ever together. We cannot act our spirit without the Holy Spirit. Alas! this is like a lump of clay in our bosoms till he quickens it; and we cannot but with our heart and spirit, when the Holy Spirit moves upon it. The Spirit's breath is vital. The Holy Ghost doth not breathe in us as one through a trunk or trumpet, which is a mere passive instrument; but stirs up our hearts, and actuates our affections in the duty. Prayer is called a pouring out of the soul to God. The soul is the well from which the water of prayer is poured; but the Spirit is the spring that feeds this well, and the hand that helps to pour it forth. The well would have no water without the

spring, neither could it deliver itself of it without one to draw it. Thus the Spirit of God must fill the heart with praying affections, and enable them also to pour themselves forth. From the words thus sensed, we shall a while dwell upon these two propositions. First. He who will pray acceptably, must pray in his heart and spirit. Second. He that would pray in his own spirit, must pray in the Spirit of God.

BRANCH FIRST.

[He who will pray acceptably,
must pray in his heart and spirit.]

Praying in the spirit is opposed to lip‑labour, they draw near to me with their lips, but their heart is removed far from me; like an adulteress, whose heart and spirit is as far from her husband as where her paramour is. It is no prayer in which the heart of the person bears no part. Parisiensis, glossing upon the place of Hosea 14:2, so will we render the calves of our lips, compares the duty of prayer to the calves in the legal sacrifices. The composure of the words, saith he, in prayer, is as the skin or hide of the beast, the voice as the hair, the understanding as the flesh, the desires and affections of the heart as the fat of the inwards; this, and this alone, makes it a prayer in God's account.

My spirit prayeth, saith the apostle, I Cor. 14:14; and, I will pray with the spirit, ver. 15. So, God, whom I serve with my spirit, Rom. 1:9. The melodious sound which comes from a musical instrument, such as viol or lute, is formed within the belly of the instrument, and the deeper the belly of the instrument the sweeter is its music; the same strings on a flat board, touched by the same hand, would make no music. The melodiousness of prayer comes from within the man, We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and the deeper the groans are that come from thence, still the sweeter the melody.

There may be outward worship and inward atheism; as Melancthon said, vos Itali adoratis Deum in pane, quem non creditis in cælo esseYou Italians worship that God in bread, whom you do not believe to be in heaven. There may be much pomp in the outward ceremony of the performance, when the person neither loves nor believes that God whom he courts with an external devotion. The blemishes which made the sacrifices in the law rejected, were not only in the outward limbs of the beast, the sick as well as the lame beast was refused, Mal. 1:8.

We read of loud praises when never a word was heard spoken. But God owns none for a prayer that hath the vehemency of the voice but not inspirited with the affection of the heart. Separate the spirit from the body, and the man is dead; the heart from the lip, and there is a dissolution of prayer. Now, in handling of this I must first show what it is to pray in our spirit when these three are found in the duty:First. When we pray with knowledge. Second. When we pray in fervency.

Third. When we pray in sincerity. These three exercise the three powers of the soul and spirit. By knowledge the understanding is set on work; by fervency the affections; and by sincerity the will. All these are required in conjunction to praying in the spirit. There may be knowledge without fervency, and this, like the light of the moon, is cold, and quickens not; there may be heat without knowledge, and this is like mettle in a blind horse; there may be knowledge and fervency, and this like a chariot with swift horses, and a skilful driver in the box, but, being dishonest, carries it the wrong way.

Neither of these, nor both these together, avail, because sincerity is wanting to touch these affections, and make them stand to the right point, which is the glory of God. He will have little thanks for his zeal that is

fervent in spirit, but serving himself with it, not the Lord.

[To pray in the spirit, we must have

knowledge and understanding.]

First. To pray acceptably, or in the spirit, it is required that we pray with knowledge and understanding. A blind sacrifice was rejected in the law, Mal. 1:8; much more are blind devotions under the gospel. As knowledge aggravates a sin, so ignorance takes from the excellency of an action that is good: I bear them witness, saith Paul, they have a zeal, but not according to knowledge. The want of an eye disfigures the fairest face, the want of knowledge the devoutest prayer: Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews, John 4:22, where we see what a fundamental defect the want of knowledge is in acts of worship, such as brings damnation with it.

Question First. But why is knowledge so requisite to acceptable praying?

Answer First. Because without this it is not a reasonable service; for we know not what we do. God calls for a reasonable service, Rom. 12:1, which some oppose to the legal sacrifices. They offered up beasts to God; in the gospel we are to offer up ourselves. Now the soul and spirit of a man is the man. Why did not God lay a law on beasts to worship him, but because they have not a rational soul to understand and reflect upon their own actions? And will God accept that service and worship from man, wherein he doth not exercise that faculty that distinguisheth him from a beast? Show yourselves men, saith the prophet to those idolaters, Isa. 46:8. And truly he that worships the true God ignorantly is brutish in his knowledge as well as he that prays to a false god.

Answer Second. Because the understanding is the leading faculty of the soul, and so the key of the work. The inward worship of the heart is the chief. Now, the other powers of the soul are disabled if they want this their guide which holds the candle to them. As for those violent passions of seeming zeal, sorrow, and joy, which sometimes appear in ignorant worshippers and their blind devotions, they are spurious. Christ's sheep, like Jacob's, conceive by the eye.

1. The saint's eye is enlightened to see the majesty and glorious holiness of God, and then it reveres him, and mourns before him in the sense of his own vileness: Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, Job 42:6.

2. Again, by an eye of faith he beholds the goodness and love of God to poor sinners in Christ, and in particular to him, and this eye affects his heart to love and rely on him, which it is impossible the ignorant soul should do.

Question First. But you will say, what is necessary for the praying soul to know?

Answer First. There is required a knowledge that he to whom he directs his prayer is the true God. Religious worship is an incommunicable flower in the crown of the deity, and that both inward and outward. We are religiously to worship him only, who, by reason of his infinite perfections, deserves our supreme love, honour, and trust. He must have the crown that owes the kingdom. The kingdom and power are Gods. Therefore the glory of religious worship belongs to him alone, Matt. 6:13. Angels are the highest order of creatures, but we are forbid to worship any of the host of heaven, Deut. 17:3. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee it doth appertain where fear is put for religious worship, as appears by the circumstance of the place. The want of this knowledge filled the heathen world with idolatry. For,

where they found any virtue or excellency in the creature, presently they adored and worshipped it, like some ignorant rustic, who coming to court, thinks every one he sees in brave clothes to be the king.

Answer Second. There is required a knowledge of this true God, what his nature is. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 11:6. It is confessed, a perfect knowledge of the divine perfections is incomprehensible by a finite being. He answered right who said when asked quid est Deus? what is God? si scirem essem ipse Deus if I knew, I myself would be God. None indeed knows God thus but God himself; yet a Scripture knowledge of him is necessary to the right performance of this duty. The want of understanding his omniscience and infinite mercy, is the cause of vain babbling, and a conceit to prevail by long prayers, which our Saviour charges upon the heathen, and prevents in his disciples by acquainting them with these attributes, Matt. 6:7, 8. They came rather narrare than rogare to inform God than to beg. The ignorance of his high and glorious majesty is the cause why so many are rude and slovenly in their gesture, so saucy and irreverently familiar with God in their expressions. We are bid to be sober, watching unto prayer. Truly there is an insobriety in our very language, when we do not clothe the desires of our hearts with such humble expressions as may signify the awe and dread of his sacred majesty in our hearts. In a word, the reason why men dare come reeking out of the adulterous embraces of their lusts, and stretch forth their unwashed hands to heaven in prayer whence is it? but because they know not God to be of such infinite purity as will have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity? Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, Ps. 50:21.

Answer Third. We must understand the matter of our prayers, what we beg, what we deprecate. Without this we cannot in faith say amen to our own prayers, but may soon ask that which neither becomes us to desire, nor is honourable for God to give. This Christ rebuked, when she in the gospel put up her ambitious request for her children to be set one at the right the other at the left hand of Christ in his kingdom. God never gave us leave thus to indite our own prayers by the dictate of our private spirit, but hath bound us up to ask only what he hath promised to give.

Answer Fourth. There is required a knowledge of the manner how we are to pray; as, in whose name, and what qualifications are required in the prayer and person praying. We find Paul begging prayers, that ye strive together with me in your prayers. In another place he tells us of a lawful striving, II Tim. 2:5. There is a law of prayer which must be observed, or we come at our own adventure. Even in false worship they go by some rule in their addresses to their gods. Therefore those smattering Samaritans, when a plague was on them, concluded the reason to be because they knew not the manner of the god of the land, II Kings 17:26. The true God will be served in due order, or else expect a breach. A word or two for application of this branch.

[Use or Application.]

Use First. How few then pray in the spirit! Were this the only character to try many by, would they not be cast over the bar for mere babblers? As, first, those in the Popish church, where most know not a word what they say in prayer. If it be such a weakness to subscribe a petition to a king, or to a parliament, which we never read or understood, what shall we then think of such brutish prayers as these sent to heaven and indorsed with an ignoramus on the back of them? Yea, amongst ourselves, many, who though they pray in their mother language, yet are as ignorant as to the matter of their prayers; how else could they patter over the creed and commandments with their blind devotion instead of prayers? Are there more deplored ruins of mankind to be found among the Indians than such? Yea, when they join with their minister in prayer, neither know that God to whom the prayer is directed, nor the Mediator under the favour

of whose name it is presented. Before Nebuchadnezzar could bless God, he had the understanding of a man given him, which these yet want. Do you not think such ignorant wretches as these might be easily persuaded to kneel before an image gaudily dressed up, or to put their letter into some angel or saint's hand for despatch, being made to believe that it will find a kinder welcome by the mediation of such favourites? O what a darkness is there even at this day upon the face of our waters! on which, had but the popes instruments opportunity to sit brooding awhile, they might soon bring their desired work to a perfection among the multitude of ignorant souls that are amidst us! We see there is need not only to stir up our people to pray, or else we send them before they have learned their errand, as if we should call a child to read before he hath learned his letters.

Use Second. It speaks to all that are at any time the mouth to God for others in prayer, so to pray, that those who join with them may clearly understand what they put up to God for them. Who is more to be blamed he that prayeth in an unknown tongue, or he that with such uncouth phrases and high-flown expressions as are not understood by half the company? Suppose thine own spirit prays, as the apostle saith, yet thy understanding is unfruitful unto them. They, alas! are at a loss, and stand gazing, as the disciples did when the cloud parted Christ from them. Either come down from thy high towering expressions, or help them up to thee. They may say of thee as those of Moses, We know not what is become of the man. No wonder if, while they cannot keep sight of the matter in hand, that their thoughts rove and dance about some object of their own framing. Dost thou pray to be admired for thy rousing tongue, height of gifts, or the like? Perhaps thou mayest have this thy reward of some ignorant ones, and others that would as fain commend themselves upon the same account; but consider what a low and base end thou propoundest in so high a service, unworthy of a Christians thought. What! no net to fish with for thy credit and applause but a sacred ordinance! The whip which Christ made in the gospel belongs to thy back. Our blessed Saviour, that was all on fire with zeal to see his house of prayer made a house of merchandise, O how doth his soul loathe the baseness of thy mercenary spirit, who dost the same, though in another dress!

[To pray in the spirit, we must have fervency.]

Second. We pray in the spirit when we pray in fervency. The soul keeps the body warm while it is in it. So much as there is our soul and spirit in a duty, so much heat and fervency. If the prayer be cold, we may certainly conclude the heart is idle, and bears no part in the duty. Our spirit is an active creature: what it doth is with a force, whether bad or good. Hence in Scripture, to set the heart and soul upon a thing, imports vehemency and fervour. Thus the poor labouring man is said to set his heart on his wages, Deut. 24:15. The hopes of what he shall have at night makes him sweat at his work in the day. Darius set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and it follows, He laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him, Dan. 6:14. When the spirit of a man is set about a work, he will do it to purpose. If thou shalt seek the Lord with all thy heart and with all thy soul, Deut. 4:29, that is, fervently. This consists not in a violent agitation of the bodily spirits. A man may put his body into a sweat in duty, and the prayer be cold. That is the fervent prayer that flows from a warm heart and enkindled affections; like an exhalation which first is set on fire in the cloud, and then breaks forth into thunder. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, Ps. 39:3, 4. Now as zeal is not one single affection, but the edge and vehemency of them all; so fervency in prayer is, when all the affections act strongly and suitably to the several parts of prayer.

In confession, then have we fervency, when the soul melts into a holy shame and sorrow for the sins he spreads before the Lord, so that he feels a holy smart and pain within, and doth not act a tragical part with

a comical heart. For, as Chrysostom saith, To paint tears is worse than to paint the face. Here is true fervency: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise, Ps. 55:2. There may be fire in the pan, when none in the piece; a loud wind, but no rain with it. David made a noise with his voice, and mourned in his spirit.

So, in petition we have fervency, when the heart is drawn out with vehement desires of the grace it prays for, not some lazy woundings or wishings, or weak velleities, but passionate breathings and breakings of heart. Sometimes it is set out by the violence of thirst, which is thought more tormenting than that of hunger. As the hunted hart panteth after the cool waters, so did Davids soul after God, Ps. 42. Sometimes it is set out by the strainings of a wrestlerso Jacob is said to wrestle with the angel; and of those that run in a race, instantly serving God day and night, Acts 26:7, < !6J,<,they stretched out themselves. My soul breaketh for longing, Ps. 119:20, as one that with straining breaks a vein.

[Why we must pray in the spirit fervently.]

Question. But why must we pray in the spirit fervently? Answer First. We must pray in the spirit fervently, from the command. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might; and these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, Deut. 6:5, 6; which imports the affectionate performance of every command and duty. Sever the outward from the inward part of Gods worship, and he owns it not. Who hath required this at your hands? Isa. 1:12. As if he had said, Did I ever command you to give a beasts heart in sacrifice, and keep back your own? Why dost thou pray at all? Wilt thou say, Because he commands it? Then, why not fervently, which the command intends chiefly? When you send for a book, would you be pleased with him that brings you only the cover? And will God accept the skin for the sacrifice? The external part of the duty is but as the cup. Thy love, faith, and joy are the wine he desires to taste of. Without these, thou givest him but an empty cup to drink in. Now, what is this but to mock him?

Answer Second. We must pray in the spirit, to comport with the name of God. The common description of prayer is calling on the name of God. Now, as in prayer we call upon the name of God, so it must be with a worship suitable to his name, or else we pollute it and incur his wrath. This is the chief meaning of the third commandment. In the first, God provides that none besides himself, the only true God, be worshipped; in the second, that he, the true God, be not served with will‑worship, but his own institutions; and in the third, that he be not served vainly and slightly in his own worship. There is no attribute in God but calls for this fervency in his worship.

1. He is a great and glorious God; and as such it becomes us to approach his presence with our affections in the best array. Are yawning prayers fit for a great Gods hearing? Darest thou speak to such a majesty before thou art well awake, and hast such a sacrifice prepared as he will accept? Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen, Mal. 1:14. See here, first, anything less than the best we have is a corrupt thing. He will accept a little, if the best, but he abhors that thou shouldst save thy best for another. Again he that offers not the bestthe strength of his affectionsis a deceiver; because he robs him of his due, and he is a great God. It is fit the princes table should be served with the best that the market affords, and not the refuse. When Jacob intended a present to the governor of the land, he bids his children take of the best of the fruit of the land in your vessels. Lastly, the awful thoughts which God extorts from the very heathen by his mighty works, do reproach us who live in the bosom of the church, and despise his name by our heedless and heartless serving of him.

2. He is the living God. Is a dead-hearted prayer a sacrifice suitable to a living God? How can that be accepted of him which never came from him? Lay not your dead prayers by his side. The lively prayer is his, the dead thine own. What the psalmist saith of persons, we may say of prayers, The living, the living they shall praise him. The glorious angels, who for their zeal are called seraphims, and a flame of fire, these he chooseth to minister to him in heaven; and the saints below who, though they sojourn on earth, yet have their extraction from heaven, and so have spirits raised and refined from the dulness of their earthly constitution these he sets apart for himself as priests to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto him. The quicker any one is himself, the more offensive is a dull leaden heeled messenger or slow-handed workman to him. How then can God, who is all life, brook thy lazy listless devotions? When he commanded the neck of an ass to be broke, and not offered up unto him, was it because he was angry with the beast? No sure, it was his own workmanship; no other than himself made it; but to teach us how unpleasant a dull heart is to him in his service.

3. He is a loving God, and love will be paid in no coin but its own. Give God love for love, or he accounts you give him nothing. If ye love me, keep my commandments, John 14:15. And, If a man would give the substance of his house for love, it would be contemned, Song 8:7. So, if a man thinks to commute with God, and give him anything in prayer instead of his love and fervent affection, it will be contemned. Let the prayer be never so pithy, the posture of the body never so devout, the voice never so loud, if the affections of the heart be not drawn out after God in the duty, he disdains and rejects it, because it doth not correspond with the dear affections which God expresseth to us. He draws out the heart with his purse, and gives his very soul and self with all his gifts to his people. Therefore he expects our hearts should come with all our services to him. It is no wonder to see the servant, whose master is hard and cruel, have no heart to or mettle in his work; but love in the master useth to put life into the servant. And therefore God, who is incomparably the best master, disdains to be served as none but the worst among men use to be.

Answer Third. We must pray in the spirit, because the promise is only to fervent prayer. A still-born child is no heir, neither is a prayer that wants life heir to any promise. Fervency is to prayer what fire was to the spices in the censer without this it cannot ascend as incense before God. Some have attempted a shorter cut to the Indies by the north, but were ever frozen up in their way; and so will all sluggish prayers be served. It were an easy voyage indeed to heaven if such prayers might find the way thither. But never could they show any of that good land's gold who prayed thus, though he were a saint. The righteous man indeed is declared heir, as to all other promises, so to this of having his prayer heard; but if he hath not aptitudinem inrandi he is not in a fit posture to enter into the possession of this promise, or claim present benefit from it, while his heart remains cold and formal in the duty. There is a qualification to the act of prayer as necessary as of the person praying: The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. When God intends a mercy for his people, he stirs up a spirit of prayer in them: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain, Isa. 45:19; that is, I never stirred them up to it, and helped them in it, and then let them lose their labour. Then ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you: and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart, Jer. 29:12, 13. Feeble desires, like weak pangs, go over, and bring not a mercy to the birth. As the full time grows nearer, so the spirit of prayer grows stronger. Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, I tell you that he will avenge them speedily, Luke 18:7, 8. None in the house perhaps will stir for a little knock at the door; they think he is some idle beggar, or one in no great haste; but if he raps thick and loud, then they go, yea, out of their beds. Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity, Luke 11:8.

[Use or Application.]

Use First. This sadly shows there is little true praying to be found among us, because few that pray fervently. Let us sort men into their several ranks.

1. The ignorant, do these pray fervently? Their hearts, alas! must needs be frozen up in the duty; they dwell too far from the sun to have any of this divine heat in their devotions.

2. The profane person, that is debauched with his filthy lusts, his heat runs out another way. Can the heart which is inflamed with lusts be any other than cold in prayer? Hell-fire must be quenched before this from heaven can be kindled.

3. The soul under the power of roving thoughts whose mind, like Satan, is walking to and fro the earth, while his eyes seem nailed to heaven can he be fervent? Can the affections be intended and the mind inattentive? Fervency unites the soul and gathers in the thoughts to the work in hand. It will not suffer diversions, but answers all foreign thoughts, as Nehemiah, in another case, did them that would have called him off from building, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease? Neh. 6:3. It is said of Elias {Elijah}, He prayed earnestly, he prayed in praying, so the Greek. As in Ezekeiels vision, there was a wheel in a wheel, so a prayer in his prayer. Whereas the roving soul is prayerless, his lips pray and his mind plays; his eye is up to heaven, as if that were his mark, but he shoots his thoughts down to the earth.

4. He to whom the duty is tedious and wearisome, who doth not sigh and groan in the duty, but under it; who prays as a sick man works in his calling, finding no delight or joy in it. True fervency suffers no weariness, feels no pain. The tradesman, when hot at his work, and the soldier in fight, the one feels not his weariness nor the other his wounds. Affections are strong things, able to pull up a weak body. Therefore, he that shrugs at a duty, and turns this way and that way, as a sick man from one side of his bed to the other for ease, shows he hath little content in the duty, and therefore less zeal. These aches of the spirit in prayer though he be a saint come of some cold he hath gotten, and declare him to be under a great distemper. A man in health finds not more savour in his food and refreshing from it, than the Christian doth in the offices of religion, when his heart is in the right temper.

Use Second. For exhortation. Dost thou pray? Pray fervently, or thou dost nothing. Cold prayer is no more prayer than painted fire is fire. That prayer which warms not thine own heart, will it, thinkest thou, move Gods? Thou drawest the tap, but the vessel is frozen. A man hath not the use of his hand clung up with cold, neither canst thou have the use of thy spirit in duty till thy heart chafed into some sense and feeling of what thou prayest for. Now to bring thy cold heart into some spiritual heat,

[Arguments to enkindle our zeal

and fervency in prayer.]

Argument 1. Consider the excellency of zeal and fervency. If a saint, thou hast a principle that inclines thee to approve of things that are excellent; and such is this. Life is the excellency of beings, yea, even in inanimate creatures there is an analogical life, and therein consists its excellency. The spirits of wine commend it; what is it worth when dead and flat? In the diamond, the sparkle gives the worth; in fountain water, that which makes it more excellent than other is its motion, called therefore living water. Much more in beings that have true life; for this the flea or fly are counted nobler creatures than the sun. The higher

kind of life that beings have, their nature is thereby the more advanced beasts above plants, men above beasts, and angels above men. Now as life gives the excellency to being, so vivacity and vigour in operating gives excellency to life. Indeed the nobler the life of the creature is, the greater energy is in its actings. The apprehension of an angel is quicker, and zeal stronger, than in a man. So that, the more lively thou art in thy duty, and the more zeal thou expressest therein, the nearer thou comest to the nature of those glorious spirits who, for their zeal in service of God, are called a flame of fire. I confess, to be calm and cool in inferior things, and in our own matters betwixt man and man, is better than zeal. So Solomon saith, A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit, Prov. 17:27. In the Hebrew it is a cool spirit. Injuries do not put him into a flame, neither do any occurrences in the world heat him to any height of joy, grief, or anger. Who more temperate in these than Moses? but set this holy man to pray, he is fire and tow, all life and zeal. Indeed it is one excellency of this fervency of spirit in prayer, that it allays all sinful passions. Davids fervency in praying for his child when alive, made him bear the tidings of his death so calmly and patiently. We hear not an angry word that Hannah replies to her scolding companion Peninnah. And why, but because she had found the art of easing her troubled spirit in prayer? What need she contend with her adversary, who could, by wrestling with God, persuade him to espouse her quarrel? And truly were there nothing else to commend fervency of spirit in prayer, this is enough that, like David's harp, it can charm the evil spirit of our passions, which in their excess the saint counts great sins, and I am sure finds them grievous troubles. When are you more placate and serene, than when the most life and fervour your souls can mount up in the flame of your sacrifices into the bosom of God? Possibly you may come, like Moses, down the mount with greater heat, but it will be against sin, not for self; whereas a formal prayer, like a plaster, which hath good ingredients in it, yet being laid cold upon the wound, hurts it rather than heals it.

Argument 2. God deserves the prime and strength of thy soul should be bestowed on him in thy prayers.

(1.) He gave thee the powers of thy soul and all thy affections. According to the mould so is the statue that is cast in it; such thou art as thou wert in the idea of the divine mind. Now, may not thy Maker call for that which was his gift? He that made the stone an inanimate being, and confined the narrow souls of brutes to act upon low sensitive good, ennobleth thee with a rational appetite and spiritual affections. Now, wilt thou not employ those divine powers in the worship of thy God, from whom, thou hadst them? This were hard indeed that God should be denied what himself gave, and not suffered to taste of his own cost. I came unto my own, saith Christ, and they would not receive me. Thus here, I came to my own creature; he had his life from me, and brings a dead heart unto me! Suppose a friend should give you notice that he will ere long be at your house, and sends you in beforehand a vessel of rich wine; which you, when he comes, grudge to broach it for his entertainment, and put him off with that which is dead and flat? Expectest thou a better friend to be thy guest than thy God? The psalmist calls upon us to serve the Lord with gladness, and what is his enforcement? Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, Ps. 100:2, 3. Who plants a vineyard and looks not to drink of the wine? If God calls our corn and wine his, he therefore expects to be served with them; much more with our love and joy, for surely he allows us not to alienate the best of his gifts from him. When thou art therefore going to pray, call up thy affections, which haply are asleep on some creature's lap, as Jonah in the sides of the ship: What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God.

(2.) He deserves thy affections because he gives thee his. He is jealous of thee because he is zealous for thee. Well may he complain of thy cold dreaming prayers whose heart is on a flame of love to thee. High and admirable are the expressions with which he sets forth his dear love to his people; whatever he doth for them is with a zeal. In protecting of them, as birds flying, so will the Lord defend Jerusalem, that is,

swiftly, as a bird flies full speed to her nest when she perceives her young is in danger; in avenging them of their enemies, the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this; in hearing their prayers he doth it with delight; in forgiving their sins he is ready to forgive, multiplies to pardon; when they ask one talent he gives them two. Jacob desires a safe egress and regress. He doth this and more than he desired, for he brings him home with two bands. Not the least mercy he gives but he draws forth his souls and heart with it; even in his afflicting providences, where he seems to show least love, there his heart overflows with it. O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? mine heart is turned within me.

(3.) He is a good pay-master for his peoples zeal. He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 11:6. Never did fervent prayer find cold welcome with him. Elias {Elijahs} prayer fetched fire from heaven because it carried fire to heaven. The tribe of Levi for their zeal were preferred to the priesthood. And why? Surely they who were so zealous in doing justice on their brethren would be no less zealous in making atonement for them by their sacrifices. Most men lose their fervency and strength of their desires by misplacing them; they are zealous for such things as cannot, and persons that oft will not, pay them for their pains. O how hot is the covetous man in his chase after the world's pelf! He pants after the dust of the earth, and that on the head of the poor. But what reward hath he for his labour? After all his getting, like the dogs in pursuit of the hare, he misseth his game, and at last goes often poor and supperless to bed in his grave; to be sure he dies a fool, Jer. 17:11. How many court-spanielsthat have fawned and flattered, yea, licked up their masters spittle, and all for some scraps of preferment have befooled themselves, when at last they have seen their creeping sordid practices rewarded with the fatal stroke of the headsman, or a lingering consumptive death in their princes favour? Which made that ambitious cardinal say too late, If he had been as observant of his heavenly Master as he had been of his earthly, he could not have been left so miserable at last. In a word, do we not see the superstitious person knocking his breast and cutting his own flesh, out of a zeal to his wooden god, that hath neither ear to hear nor hand to help him? Now, doth not the living God, thy loving Father, deserve thy zeal more than their dead and dumb idols do theirs? For shame! Let not us be cold in his worship when the idolater sweats before his god of clouts[1]; let not the worldlings zeal in pursuit of his earthly mammon leave thee lagging behind with a heedless heartless serving of thy God. Neither fear the worlds hooting at thee for thy zeal; they think thee a fool, but thou knowest them to be so.

[How to raise our affections to fervency in prayer.]

Question. But how may we get this fervency of spirit in prayer?

Answer (a). Thou who propoundest the question art a saint or not; if not, there is another question must precede this. How thou, that art at present in a state of spiritual death, mayest have spiritual life? There must be life in the soul before there can be life in the duty. All the rugs in the upholsterers shop will not fetch a dead man to warmth, nor any arguments, though taken from the most moving topics in the Scripture, will make thee pray fervently while thy soul lies in a dead state. Go first to Christ that thou mayest have life, and having life, then there is hope to chafe thee into some heat. But,

Answer (b). If thou beest a saint, it yet calls for thy utmost care to get, and when thou hast got, to keep, thy soul in a kindly heat. As the stone cannot of itself mount up into the air, so the birdthough it can do this, yetcannot stay there long without some labour and motion with its wings. The saints have a spark of heavenly fire in their bosom, but this needs the bellows of their care and diligence to keep it alive. There is a rust that breeds from the gold, a worm from the wood, a moth from the garment, that in time waste them; and ashes from the coal that choke the fire; yea, and in the saint too, which will damp his zeal if not

cleared by daily watchfulness. Observe therefore what is thy chief impediment to fervency in prayer, and set thyself vigorously against it. If thou beest remiss in this precedaneous[2] duty thou wilt be much more remiss in prayer itself. He that knows of a slough in the way, and mends it not before he takes his journey, hath no cause to wonder when his chariot is laid fast in it.

Answer (c). Now this is not the same in all, and therefore it is necessary that thou beest so much acquainted with thine own estate as to know what is thy great clog in this duty. Certainly, were not the firmament of the saints soul cooled with some malignant vapours that arise from his own breast, and weaken the force of divine grace in him, it would be summer all the year long with him, his heart would be ever warm, and his affections lively in duty. Look therefore narrowly whence thy cooling comes. Perhaps thy heart is too much let out upon the world in the day, and at night thy spirits are spent, when thou shouldst come before the Lord in prayer. If thou wilt be hotter in duty thou must be colder towards the world. A horse that carrieth a pack all day is unfit to go post at night. Wood that hath the sap in it will not burn easily; neither will thy heart readily take fire in holy duties who comest so sopped in the world to them. Drain, therefore, thy heart of these eager affections to that, if thou meanest to have them warm and lively in this. Now, no better way for this than to set thy soul under the frequent meditation of Christ's love to thee, thy relation to him, with the great and glorious things thou expectest from him in another world. This, or nothing, will dry up thy love to this world, as your wood which is laid a sunning is made fit for the fire. Whereas, let your hearts continue soaking in the thoughts of an inordinate love to the world, and you will find, when you come to pray, that thy heart will be in a duty even as a foggy wet log at the back of a fire, long in kindling, and soon out again. Haply the deadness of thy heart in prayer ariseth from want of a deep sense of thy wants and mercies thou desirest to have supplied. Couldst thou but pray feelingly no doubt but thou wouldst pray fervently. The hungry man needs no help from art to learn him how to beg; his pinched bowels make him earnest and eloquent.

Is it pardon of sin thou wouldst pray for? First see what anguish of spirit they put thee to. Do with thy soul as the chirurgeon with his patients wounds, who syringeth them with some sharp searching water to try what sense he hath of them. Apply such considerations to thy soul as may make thee feel their smart, and be sensible of thy deplored estate by reason of them; then go and sleep at prayer if thou canst. We have David first affecting his heart, and expressing the dolor of his soul for his sin: Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me, Ps. 38:4. Now when his heart is sick with these thoughts, as one with strong physic working in his stomach, he pours out his soul in prayer to God, All my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee, ver. 9.

Art thou to pray for others? First pierce thy heart through with their sorrows, and, by a spirit of sympathy, bring thyself to feel their miseries as if thou wert in their case. Then will thy heart be warm in prayer for them when it flows from a heart melted in compassion to them. Thus we read Christ troubled himself for Lazarus before he lifted up his eyes to heaven for him, John 11:33, 38, compared.

Again, it may be thy want of zeal proceeds from a defect in thy faith. Faith is the back of steel to the bow of prayer; this sends the arrow with a force to heaven. Where faith is weak the cry will not be strong. He that goes about a business with little hope to speed will do it but faintly; he works, as we say, for a dead horse. It is a true axiom, voluntas non fertur in impossibilitate the less we hope the less we endeavour. We read of strong cries that Christ put up in the days of his flesh. Now mark what enforced his prayer unto him that was able to save him; and not only so, but if you look into that prayer to which this refers, you shall find that he clasped about God as his God My God, my God. His hold on God held up his spirit in prayer. So in the several precedents of praying saints upon Scripture record, you may see how the spirit of prayer

ebbed and flowed, fell and rose, as their faith was up and down. This made David press so hard upon God in the day of his distress: I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted, Ps. 116:10. This made the woman of Canaan so invincibly importunate. Let Christ frown and chide, deny and rebuke her, she yet makes her approaches nearer and nearer, gathering arguments from his very denials, as if a soldier should shoot his enemys bullets back upon him again; and Christ tells us what kept her spirit undaunted, O woman, great is thy faith!

Again, may be it proceeds from some distaste thou hast given to the Holy Spirit, who alone can blow up thy affections; and then, no wonder thou art cold in prayer when he is gone that should keep thy heart warm at it. What is the body without the soul but cold clay, dead earth? and what the soul without the Spirit? truly no better. O invite him back to thy soul, or else thy praying work is at an end. And, if thou wouldst persuade him to return, observe what was the thing that distasted him, and remove it. That which makes this dove forsake its lockyers will hinder his return if not taken away.

[To pray in the spirit, we must have sincerity.]

Third. We pray in the spirit when we pray in sincerity. There may be much fervour where there is little or no sincerity. And this is strange fire; the heat of a distemper, not the kindly natural heat of the new creature, which both comes from God and acts for God; whereas the other is from self, and ends in self. Indeed the fire which self kindles serves only to warm the man's own hands by it that makes it: Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, Isa. 50:11; the prophet represents them as sitting down about the fire they had made. Self-acting and self-aiming ever go together; therefore our Saviour with spirit requires truth. He seeketh such to worship him as will worship him in spirit and in truth, John 4:23, 24.

Question. But wherein consists this sincere fervency?

Answer. Zeal intends the affections, sincerity directs their end, and consists in their purity and incorruption. The blood is oft hot when none of the purest, and affections strong when the heart insincere; therefore the apostle exhorts us that we love one another out of a pure heart fervently, I Peter 1:22, and speaks in another place of sorrowing after a godly sort, that is, sincerely. Now the sincerity of the heart in prayer then appears when a person is real in his prayers, and that from pure principles to pure ends.

First. When he is real in what he presents to God in prayer. The index of his tongue without and the clockwork of his heart within go together; he doth not declaim against a sin with his lips which he favours with his heart; he doth not make a loud cry for that grace which he would be sorry to have granted him. This is the true badge of a hypocrite, who oft would be loath {that} God should take him at his word. A dismal day it would be to such when God shall bring in their own conscience to witness against them that their hearts never signed and sealed the requests which they made. There is a state-policy used sometimes by princes to send ambassadors, and set treaties on foot, when nothing less than peace is intended. Such a deceit is to be found in the false heart of man, to blind and cover secret purposes of war and rebellion against God with fair overtures in prayer to him for peace.

Second. When the person is not only real in what he desires, but this from a pure principle to a pure end. I doubt not but a hypocrite in confession may have a real trouble upon his spirit for his sins, and cordially, yea passionately, desire his pardoning mercy; but not from a pure principlea hatred of sin but an abhorreny of wrath he sees hastening to him for it; not for a pure end, that the glory of Gods mercy may be magnified in and by him, but that himself may not be tormented by Gods just wrath. He may desire the

graces of his Spirit, but not out of any love to them, but only as an expedient, without which he knows to hell he must go; as a sick man in exquisite torturesuppose of the stone or some other acute diseaserecalls for some potion he loathes, because he knows he cannot have ease except he drinks it. Whereas the sincere soul desires grace, not only as physic, but food. He craves it not only as necessary but as sweet to his palate. The intrinsical bounty and excellency of holiness inflames him with such a love to it, that, as one taken with the beauty of a virgin, saith he will marry her though he hath nothing with her but the clothes to her back; so the sincere heart would have holiness though it brought no other advantages with it than what is found in its own lovely nature. So much to show what sincerity in prayer is.

Now he that would pray acceptably must pray thus in his spirit, that is, with the sincerity of his spirit. The prayer of the upright is his delight. Nadab and Abihu brought fire, and had fire, a strange fire, to destroy them for the strange fire they offered; and such is all fervency and zeal that is not taken from the altar of a sincere heart, Lev. 10:1. The fervent prayerB@8xÆFPb,4availeth much. It can do much, but it must be of a righteous man, and such the sincere man only is. And no wonder that God stands so much upon sincerity in prayer, seeing the lip of truth is so prized even among men. Nature hath taught men to commend their words to others by laying their hands on their breasts, as an assurance that what they say or promise is true and cordial; which the penitent publican it is like aimed at, he smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, Luke 18:13, thereby declaring whence his sorrowful confession came. That light which told the heathens that God must be worshipped, informed them also this worship must come from the inward recesses of the heart. In sancto quid facit aurum quin damnus id superis, &c.what care the gods for gold! let us offer that which is more worth than all treasures, sanctos recessus animithe heart and inward affections of it. It is a strange custom Benzo, in his Historia Novi Orbis, relates of the natives there: Indi occidentales dum sacra faciunt, dimisso in guttur bacillo, vomitum cient, ut idolo ostendant nihil se in pectore mali occultum gererethe West Indians, when worshipping their gods, used, by putting a little stick down their throat, to provoke themselves to vomit, thereby showing their idol that they carried no secret evil within them. I should not have named this barbarous custom but to show how deeply this notion is engraven in the natural consciencethat we must be sincere in the worship of God.

Use. Let it put us upon the trial whether we thus pray in the spiritwhether you can find sincerity stamped on your fervency. If the prayer be not fervent it cannot be sincere, but it may have a fervour without this. This is a very fine sieve; approve thyself here, and thou mayest without presumption write thyself a saint. But how fervent soever thou art without sincerity, it matters not. Nay, zeal without uprightness is worse than key‑cold; none will go to hell with more shame than the false-hearted zealot, who mounts up towards heaven in the fiery chariot, a seeming zeal, but at last is found a devil in Samuels mantle, and so is thrown down like lightning from heaven, whither he would have been thought by his neighbours to be going. Be not loath to be searched. Then there will then need no further search to prove thee unsound. If Gods officer be denied entrance, all is not right within. Now to help thee in the work, inquire

[Rules for trying the sincerity of our hearts in prayer.]

Rule 1. What is thy care in performing this duty of prayer in secret? If thy heart be sincere, it will delight in privacy. A false heart calls others to see his zeal for God. May be he is forward to put himself upon duty where he hath spectators to applaud him, and can be very hot and earnest at the work; but wither he is wholly a stranger to secret prayer, or else he is cold in the performance; he finds himself becalmed now he wants the breath of others to fill his sails. The plummets are off which quickened his motion, and he moves heavily to what he did before company. Whereas a sincere Christian never finds more freedom of spirit, and liquefactions of soul, than in his solitary addresses to God. Joseph, when he would give full vent to his

passion, sought some secret place where to weep, and therefore retired himself into his chamber, Gen. 43:30. So the sincere Christian goes to his closet, and there easeth his heart into the bosom of God, and lets his passions of sorrow for sin, and love to Christ, burst forth and have their full scope, which in public prayer he restrains as to the outward expression of them out of a holy modesty, and fear of being observed by others, which he hunts not for. Now speak, Christian, what is thy temper? Can thy closet witness for thee in this particular? It is the trick of a hypocrite to strain himself to the utmost in duty when he hath spectators, and to draw loose in his gears when alone; like some that carry their best meat to market, and save the worst for their own food at home; and others that draw their best wine to their customers, but drink the dead and flat themselves at their own private table.

Rule 2. Observe thyself in thy more public addresses to the throne of grace: and that in two particulars. (1.) When thou prayest before others. (2.) When thou joinest with others that pray.

(1.) When thou prayest before others, observe on what thou bestowest thy chief care and zeal, whether in the externals or internals of prayer that which is exposed to the eye and ear of men, or that which should be prepared for the eye and ear of God; the devout posture of thy body, or the inward devotion of thy soul; the pomp of thy words, or the power of thy faith; the agitation of thy bodily spirits in the vehemency of thy voice, or the fervency of thy spirit in heart-breaking affections. These inward workings of the soul in prayer are the very soul of prayer; and all the care about the other without this, is like the trimming bestowed upon a dead body that will not make the carcass sweet, nor these thy prayer to Gods nostrils. It is the faith, love, brokenness of heart for sin, and the inward affections exerted in prayer, that, like Elijah in his fiery chariot, mount up to God in the heavens, while the other, with the prophets mantle, fall to the ground. The sincere soul dares not be rude in his outward posture. He is careful of his very words and phrase, that they may be grave and pertinent. Neither would he pray them asleep that joins with him, by a cold, dreaming, and lazy manner of delivering of it; but still, it is the inward disposition of his heart he principally looks to, knowing well, that by the other he is but cook to others, and may fast himself if his own heart be idle in the duty; and therefore he doth not count he prays well though to the affecting of their hearts except he finds his own affections drawn out in the duty. Whereas the hypocrite, if he may but come off the duty with the applause of others in the external performance, is very well pleased, though he be conscious of the deadness and naughtiness of his own heart therein.

(2.) When thou joinest with others that pray. Do the gifts and graces that breathe from others in prayer warm thy affections, and draw out thy soul to bear them company to heaven in the petitions they put up? Or do they stir up a secret envying and repining at the gifts of God bestowed on them? This would discover much pride and unsoundness in thy spirit. The hypocrite is proud, and thinks all the water is spilt and lost that runs beside his own mill; whereas the sincere soul prizeth the gifts of others, can heartily bless God for them, and make a humble and holy use of them. His heart is as much affected with the holy savoury requests that another puts up, as when they come out of his own mouth. But the hypocrite's eye is evil, because Gods is good.

Rule 3. Observe whether thy fervency in prayer be uniform. A false heart may seem very hot in praying against one sin; but he can skip over another, and either leave it out of his confession, or handles it very gently. As a partial witness, that would fain save the prisoners life he comes against, will not speak all he knows, but minceth his evidence; thus doth the hypocrite deal with his darling lust. He is like one that mows grass with a gapped scythe; some he cuts down, and other he leaves standing; vehement against this, and favourable to that lust; whereas sincerity makes clear work as it goes. Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me, Ps. 119:133.

Again the false heart is as uneven in his petitions as in his deprecations. Very earnest he is for some mercies, and they are commonly of an inferior nature, but more indifferent in his desires for those that are greater; he tithes mint and cummin in his prayers temporal mercies, I mean but neglects the weightier things of the promise the sanctifying graces of the Spirit, humility, heavenly-mindedness, contentment, self-denial; a little of these upon a knives point will content him.

Rule 4. Observe whether thy endeavours correspond with thy prayers. The false heart seems hot in prayer, but you will find him cold enough at work. He prays very fiercely against his sins, as if he desired them to be all slain upon the place; but what doth he towards the speeding of them with his own hands? Doth he set himself upon the work of mortification? doth he withdraw the fuel that feeds them? is he careful to shun occasions that may ensnare him? When temptations come, do they find him in arms upon his guard, resolved to resist their motion? Alas! no such matter. If a few good words in prayer will do the work, well and good; but as for any more, he is too lazy to go about it. Whereas the sincere heart is not idle after prayer; when it hath given heaven the alarm, and called God in to his help, then he takes the field himself, and opposeth his lusts with all his might, watching their motions, and taking every advantage he meets with to fall upon them. Every mercy he receives, he beats it out into a weapon, to knock down all thoughts of sinning again. Thus, Seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments? Ezra 9:13, 14. O God forbid, saith the holy soul, that he should bid such a thought welcome! Every promise he reads, he lifts it up as a sword for his defence against this enemy. Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves, II Cor. 7:1. I shall shut up this head with a few directions how we may get this sincere heart in prayer.

[How we may get this sincerity in prayer.]

(1.) Get thy heart united by faith to Christ. It is faith that purifies the heart from its false principles and ends in duty. God made man upright; and, while he stood so, his eye and foot went right; neither did his eye look or his foot tread awry. But after Eve had talked with the serpent, she and all mankind after her learned the serpents crooked motion, to look one way and go another. God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions, Ecc. 7:29. O beg therefore, with David, that God would renew a right spirit within thee, Ps. 51:10. What the evil spirit hath perverted the Holy Spirit alone can set right. If the cause why a piece carries wrong be in its make and mould, it must be new cast, or it will never carry right. Hypocrisy in duty comes from the falseness of mans depraved nature; the heart therefore must be made new before it can be sincere. The new heart is the single heart, I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, Eze. 11:19. He that loves truth in the inward parts can put it there.

(2.) Make hypocrisy in prayer appear as odious to thee as possibly thou canst; and thou needest not dress it up in any other than its own clothes to do this. Consider but how grievous a sin and how great a folly it is, and methinks it were enough to set thee against it.

(a) Consider what a grievous sin it is. A lie spoken by one man to another is a sin capable of high aggravations; what then is that lie which is uttered in prayer to God? Surely this must be much more horrid, for here is blasphemy in the untruth. God spares not to give the hypocrite the lie, Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit, Hosea 11:12; so many lies they told to God, as prayers they put up. O the patience of a God that doth not strike the hypocrite dead upon the place, while the lie is in his throat, as he did Ananias and Sapphira.

(b) Consider what a great folly it is. [1.] As it is infeasible. Who but a fool can think to blind the eyes of the Almighty? Canst thou cover the eye of the sun with thy hand or hat, that it shall not shine? as unable art thou to hide thy secret designs so close that the great God should not see them. [2.] As it is impossible to deceive God, so thou puttest a woful cheat upon thyself. Thou thinkest thou mendest the matter by praying, and thou makest it worse. When thou comest on thy trial for thy life, thy hypocrisy in prayer will cost thee dearer than thy other sins. Thou takest pains to increase thy condemnation; thou dost, as Solomon saith of another kind of hypocrite, Prov. 1:18, lay wait for thy own blood; they lurk privily for thy own life. Of all sinners, the hypocrite hath the precedency in Gods purposes and preparations of wrath. Hell is prepared for them as the firstborn of damnation. Other sinners are said to have their portion with hypocrites, as the younger brethren with their elder, who is the heir, Matt. 24:51.

(3.) Crucify thy affections to the world. Hypocrisy in religion springs from the bitter root of some carnal affections unmortified. So long as thy prey lies below, thy eye will be to the earth, even when thou seemest like an eagle to mount in thy prayers to heaven. The false heart does uti Deo ut fruatur mundohe useth religion for secular ends, and makes his seeming piety to God but as a horsing‑block to get into the creatures saddle. God is in his mouth, but the world is in his heart; which he projects to attain more easily by the reputation that this will gain him. I have read of one that offered his prince a great sum of money for no more but to have his leave once or twice a day to come into his presence, and only say, God save your majesty. The prince, wondering at this large offer for so small a favour, asked him what this would advantage him? O sir, saith he, this, though I have nothing else at your hands, will get me a name in the country for one that is a great favourite at court, and such an opinion will help me to more by the year's end than I am out for the purchase. Thus some, it is to be feared, by the very name which they get for great saints among their neighbours, from their acquaintance with religious duties, do facilitate their carnal projects, and advance their worldly interest, that lie at the bottom of all their goodly profession. Well, Christian, this is but to play at small gameto fish for any of the world's petty enjoyments with religions golden hook. As thou lovest thy soul, and wouldst not lose this for ever, to get that which thou must lose after thou hast got it, mortify those carnal affections which thou findest most likely to withdraw thy heart from God. Thou knowest not God, if thou seest not enough in him to make thee happy without the world's contributions. This, thoroughly believed, will make thee sincere in his service. I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect, Gen. 17:1.

BRANCH SECOND.

[He that would pray in his own spirit,

must pray in the Spirit of God.]

Having despatched the first importance of this phrase, praying in the spirit, viz. the spirit of the person that prayeth, and shown that then a person prays in the spirit when his own soul and spirit acts in the dutywhen he prays with understanding, fervency, and sincerity; now we proceed to the second importance of the phrase. To pray in the Spirit is to pray in, or with, the Spirit of God; praying in the Holy Ghost, Jude 20. So that the note or doctrine to be insisted on will be this,

Doctrine.

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