

—The servants of Christ have usually never so much of the joy in the Holy Ghost, as in their greatest sufferings; especially if they be for his sake. The soul never retireth so readily and delightfully to God, as when it hath no one else that will receive it, or that it can take any comfort from. God comforteth us most, when he hath made us see that none else can or will relieve us. When all friends have forsaken us save only one, that one is sweeter to us than ever. When all our house is fired down except one room, that room is pleasanter to us than it was before. He that hath lost one eye, will love the other better than before. In prosperity our delights in God are too often corrupted by a mixture of sensual delight; but all that remaineth when the creature is gone, is purely divine.

Direct. XVI. Labour by self-examination, deliberately managed under the direction of an able spiritual guide, to settle your souls in the well-grounded persuasion of your special interest in God and heaven; and then suffer not Satan, by his troublesome importunity, to renew your doubts, or molest your peace.—An orderly, well-guided, diligent self-examination, may quickly do much to show you your condition; and if you are convinced that the truth of grace is in you, let not fears and suspicion go for reason, and cause you to deny that which you cannot, without the gainsaying of your consciences, deny. You see not the design of the devil in all this: his business is, by making you fear that you have no interest in God, to destroy your delight in him and in his service: and next that, to make you through weariness forsake him; and either despair, or turn to sensual delights. Foresee and prevent these designs of Satan, and suffer him not at his pleasure to raise new storms of fears and troubles, and draw you to deny your Father's mercies, or to suspect his proved love.

Direct. XVII. Damp not your delights by wilful sin.—If you grieve your Comforter he will grieve you, or leave you to grieve yourselves: in that measure that any known sin is cherished, delight in God will certainly decay.

Direct. XVIII. Improve your observation of wicked men's sensual delights, to provoke your souls to delight in God.—Think with yourselves: Shall hawks, and hounds, and pride, and filthiness, and cards, and dice, and plays, and sports, and luxury, and idleness, and foolish talk, or worldly honours, be so delightful to these deluded sinners? and shall not my God and Saviour, his love and promises, and the hopes of heaven, be more delightful to me? Is there any comparison between the matter of my delights and theirs?

Direct. XIX. Labour to overcome those fears of death, which would damp your joys in the foresight of everlasting joys.—As nothing more feedeth holy delights than the forethoughts of heaven; so there is scarce any thing that more hindereth our delight in those forethoughts, than the fear of interposing death. See what I have written against this fear, in my "Treatise of Self-denial," and "Saints' Rest," and in my "Treatise of Death, as the last Enemy," and in my "Last Work of a Believer."

Direct. XX. Pretend not any other religious duties against your delights in God and holiness; but use them all in their proper subservience to this.—Penitent sorrow is only a purge to cast out those corruptions which hinder you from relishing your spiritual delights. Use it therefore as physic, only when there is need; and not for itself, but only to this end; and turn it not into your ordinary food. Delight in God is the health of your souls: say not you cannot have while to be healthful, because you must take physic, or that you take physic against

health, or instead of health, but for your health. So take up no sorrow against your delight in God, or instead of it, but for it, and so much as promoteth it. See the directions for love foregoing.

By this time you may see, that holy delight adjoined to love, is the principal part of our religion, and that they mistake it which place it in any thing else. And therefore how inexcusable are all the ungodly enemies or neglecters of a holy life. If it had been a life of grief and toil, they had had some pretence; but to fly from pleasure, and refuse delight, and such delight, is inexcusable. Be it known to you, sinners, God calleth you not to forsake delight, but to accept it; to change your delight in sin and vanity, for delight in him. You dare not say but this is better: you cannot have your houses and lands for ever, nor your lust and luxury for ever; but you may have God for ever. And do you hope to live for ever with him, and have you no delight in him? Men deal with Christ as the papists with the reformed churches: because we reject their formalities and ceremonious toys, they say we take down all religion. So because we would call men from their brutish pleasures, they say we would let them have no pleasure; for the epicure thinks, when his luxury, lust, and sport is gone, all is gone. Call a sluggard from his bed, or a glutton from his feast, to receive a kingdom, and he will grudge, if he observe only what you would take from him, and not what you give him in its stead. When earthly pleasures end in misery, then who would not wish they had preferred the holy, durable delights?

Grand Direct. XIV. Let thankfulness to God thy Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator, be the very temperament of thy soul, and faithfully expressed by thy tongue and life.

For a life of thankfulness.

Though our thankfulness is no benefit to God, yet he is pleased with it, as that which is suitable to our condition, and showeth the ingenuity and honesty of the heart. An unthankful person is but a devourer of mercies, and a grave to bury them in, and one that hath not the wit and honesty to know and acknowledge the hand that giveth them; but the thankful looketh above himself, and returneth all, as he is able, to him from whom they flow.

True thankfulness to God is discerned from counterfeits, by these qualifications: 1. True thankfulness having a just estimate of mercies comparatively, preferreth spiritual and everlasting mercies before those that are merely corporal and transitory. But carnal thankfulness chiefly valueth carnal mercies, though notionally it may confess that the spiritual are the greater. 2. True thankfulness inclineth the soul to a spiritual rejoicing in God, and to a desire after more of his spiritual mercies: but carnal thankfulness is only a delight in the prosperity of the flesh, or the delusion and carnal security of the mind, inclining men to carnal, empty mirth, and to a desire of more such fleshly pleasure, plenty, or content: as a beast that is full fed, will skip, and play, and show that he is pleased with his state; or if he have ease, he would not be molested. 3. True thankfulness kindleth in the heart a love to the giver above the gift, or at least a love to God above our carnal prosperity and pleasure, and bringeth the heart still nearer unto God, by all his mercies. But carnal thankfulness doth spring from carnal self-love, or love of fleshly prosperity; and is moved by it, and is subservient to it, and loveth God, and thanketh him, but so far as he gratifieth or satisfieth the flesh. A childlike thankfulness maketh us love our Father more than his gift, and desire to be with him in his

arms; but a dog doth love you and is thankful to you but for feeding him: he loveth you in subordination to his appetite and his bones. 4. True thankfulness inclineth us to obey and please him, that obligeth us by his benefits. But carnal thankfulness puts God off with the hypocritical, complimentary thanks of the lips, and spends the mercy in the pleasing of the flesh, and makes it but the fuel of lust and sin. 5. True thankfulness to God is necessarily transcendent, as his mercies are transcendent. The saving of our souls from hell, and promising us eternal life, besides the giving us our very beings and all that we have, do oblige us to be totally and absolutely his, that is so transcendent a Benefactor to us, and causeth the thankful person to devote and resign himself and all that he hath to God, to answer so great an obligation. But carnal thankfulness falls short of this absolute and total dedication, and still leaveth the sinner in the power of self-love, devoting himself (really) to himself, and using all that he is, or hath, to the pleasing of his fleshly mind, and giving God only the tithes or leavings of the flesh, or so much as it can spare, lest he should stop the streams of his benignity, and bereave the flesh of its prosperity and contents.

Directions for Thankfulness to God, our Benefactor.

Direct. I. Understand well how great this duty is, in the nature of the thing, but especially how the very design and tenor of the gospel, and the way of our salvation by a Redeemer, bespeaketh it as the very complexion of the soul, and of every duty.— A creature that is wholly his Creator's, and is preserved every moment by him, and daily fed and maintained by his bounty, and is put into a capacity of life eternal, must needs be obliged to incessant gratitude. And unthankfulness among men is justly taken for an unnatural, monstrous vice, which forfeiteth the benefits of friendship and society: 2 Tim. iii. 2, the "unthankful" are numbered with the "unholy," &c. as part of the monsters which should come in the last times (and which we have lived to see, exactly answering that large description of them). But the design of God in the work of redemption, is purposely laid for the raising of the highest thankfulness in man: and the covenant of grace containeth such abundant, wondrous mercies, as might compel the souls of men to gratitude, or leave them utterly without excuse. It is a great truth, and much to be considered, that gratitude is that general duty of the gospel, which containeth and animateth all the rest, as being essential to all that is properly evangelical. A law, as a law, requireth obedience as the general duty: and this obedience is to be exercised and found in every particular duty which it requireth. And the covenant with the Jews was called, The Law, because the regulating part was most eminent: and so obedience was the thing that was eminently required by the law, though their measure of mercy obliged them also to thankfulness. But the gospel or new covenant is most eminently a history of mercy, and a tender and promise of the most unmatched benefits that ever were heard of by the ears of man: so that the gift of mercy is the predominant or eminent part in the gospel or new covenant: and though still God be our Governor, and the new covenant also hath its precepts, and is a law, yet that is, in a sort, but the subservient part. And what obedience is to a law, that thankfulness is to a benefit, even the formal answering of its obligation: so that though we are called to as exact obedience as ever, yet it is now only a thankful obedience that we

Gratitude is to the promise, much what obedience is to the law.

are called to. And just as law and promises or gifts are conjoined in the new covenant, just so should obedience and thankfulness be conjoined in our hearts and lives; one to God as our Ruler, and the other to him as our Benefactor: and these two must animate every act of heart and life. We must repent of sin; but it must be a thankful repenting, as becometh those that have a free pardon of all their sins procured by the blood of Christ, and offered them in the gospel: leave out this gratitude, and it is no evangelical repentance. And what is our saving faith in Christ, but the assent to the truth of the gospel, with a thankful acceptance of the good which it offereth us, even Christ as our Saviour, with the benefits of his redemption. The love to God that is there required, is the thankful love of his redeemed ones: and the love to our very enemies, and the forgiving of wrongs, and all the love to one another, and all the works of charity there required, are the exercises of gratitude, and are all to be done, on this account, because Christ hath loved us, and forgiven us, and that we may show our thankful love to him. Preaching, and praying, and sacraments, and public praises, and communion of saints, and obedience, are all to be animated with gratitude; and they are no further evangelically performed, than thankfulness is the very life and complexion of them all. The dark and defective opening of this by preachers, gave occasion to the antinomians to run into the contrary extreme, and to derogate too much from God's law and our obedience; but if we obscure the doctrine of evangelical gratitude, we do as bad or worse than they. Obedience to our Ruler, and thankfulness to our Benefactor, conjoined and co-operating as the head and heart in the natural body, do make a christian indeed. Understand this well, and it will much incline your hearts to thankfulness.

Direct. II. Let the greatness of the manifold mercies of God, be continually before your eyes.— Thankfulness is caused by the due apprehension of the greatness of mercies. If you either know them not to be mercies, or know not that they are mercies to you, or believe not what is said and promised in the gospel, or forget them, or think not of them, or make light of them through the corruption of your minds, you cannot be thankful for them. I have before spoken of mercy in order to the kindling of love, and therefore shall now only recite these following, to be always in our memories. 1. The love of God in giving you a Redeemer, and the love of Christ in giving his life for us, and in all the parts of our redemption. 2. The covenant of grace, the pardon of all our sins: the justification of our persons: our adoption, and title to eternal life. 3. The aptness of means for calling us to Christ: the gracious and wise disposals of Providence to that end: the gifts and compassion of our instructors: the care of parents: and the helps and examples of the servants of Christ. 4. The efficacy of all these means: the giving us to will and to do, and opening of our hearts, and giving us repentance unto life, and the Spirit of Christ to mortify our sins, and purify our nature, and dwell within us. 5. A standing in his church, under the care of faithful pastors: the liberty, comfort, and frequent benefit of his word and sacraments, and the public communion of his saints. 6. The company of those that fear the Lord, and their faithful admonitions, reproofs, and encouragements: the kindness they have showed us for body, or for soul. 7. The mercies of our relations, or habitations, our estates, and the notable alterations and passages of our lives. 8. The manifold preservations and deliverances of our souls,

from errors and seducers; from terrors and distress; from dangerous temptations, and many a soul-wounding sin; and that we are not left to the errors and desires of our hearts, to seared consciences, as forsaken of God. 9. The manifold deliverances of our bodies from enemies, hurts, distresses, sicknesses, and death. 10. The mercies of adversity, in wholesome, necessary chastisements, or honourable sufferings for his sake, and support or comfort under all. 11. The communion which our souls have had with God, in the course of our private and public duties, in prayer, sacraments, and meditation. 12. The use which he hath made of us for the good of others; that our time hath not been wholly lost, and we have not lived as burdens of the world. 13. The mercies of all our friends and his servants, which were to us as our own; and our interest in the mercies and public welfare of his church, which are more than our own. 14. His patience and forbearance with us under our constant unprofitableness and provocations, and his renewed mercies notwithstanding our abuse: our perseverance until now. 15. Our hopes of everlasting rest and glory, when this sinful life is at an end. Aggravate these mercies in your more enlarged meditations, and they will sure constrain you to cry out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies," Psal. ciii. 1—4. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful to him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations," Psal. c. 4, 5. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy to them that fear him," Psal. ciii. 8, 11. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever," Psal. cxxxvi. 1, &c. "O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the people. Sing ye unto him, sing psalms unto him; talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek him," Psal. cv. 1—3.

Direct. III. Be well acquainted with the greatness of your sins, and sensible of them as they are the aggravation of God's mercies to you.—This is the main end why God will humble those that he will save; not to drive them to despair of mercy, nor that he taketh pleasure in their sorrows for themselves; but to work the heart to a due esteem of saving mercy, and to a serious desire after it, that they may thankfully receive it, and carefully retain it, and faithfully use it. An unhumiliated soul sets light by Christ, and grace, and glory: it relisheth no spiritual mercy: it cannot be thankful for that which it findeth no great need of. But true humiliation recovereth our appetite, and teacheth us to value mercy as it is. Think therefore what sin is, (as I have opened to you, *direct. viii.*) and think of your manifold aggravated sins: and then think how great those mercies are that are bestowed on so great, unworthy sinners! Then mercy will melt your humbled hearts, when you confess that you are "unworthy to be called sons," Luke xv. ; and that you are not worthy to look up to heaven," Luke xviii. 13; and that you are "not worthy of the least of all the mercies of God," Gen. xxxii. 10. The humble soul is the thankful soul, and therefore so greatly valued by the Lord.

Direct. IV. Understand what misery you were delivered from, and estimate the greatness of the mercy, by the greatness of the punishment which you had deserved.—Misery as well as sin must tell us the greatness of our mercies. This is before opened, chap. i. *direct. ix.*

Direct. V. Suppose you saw the damned souls, or suppose you had been one day in hell yourselves, bethink you then how thankful you would have been for Christ and mercy.—And you were condemned to it by the law of God, and if death had brought you to execution you had been there, and then mercy would have been more esteemed. If a preacher were sent to those miserable souls to offer them a pardon and eternal life on the terms as they are offered to us, do you think they would make as light of it as we do?

Direct. VI. Neglect not to keep clear the evidences of thy title to those especial mercies for which thou shouldst be most thankful: and hearken not to Satan when he would tempt thee to think that they are none of thine, that so he might make thee deny God the thanks for them which he expecteth.—Of this I have spoken in the directions for love.

Direct. VII. Think much of those personal mercies which God hath showed thee from thy youth up until now, by which he hath manifested his care of thee, and particular kindness to thee.—Though the common mercies of God's servants be the greatest, which all other christians share in with each one; yet personal favours peculiar to ourselves, are apt much to affect us, as being near our apprehension, and expressing a peculiar care and love of us. Therefore christians should mark God's dealings with them, and write down the great and notable mercies of their lives (which are not unfit for others to know, if they should see it).

Direct. VIII. Compare thy proportion of mercies with the rest of the people's in the world. And thou wilt find that it is not one of many thousands that hath thy proportion.—It is so small a part of the world that are christians, and of those so few that are orthodox, reformed christians, and of those so few that are seriously godly as devoted to God, and of those so few that fall not into some perplexities, errors, scandals, or great afflictions and distress, that those few that are in none of these ranks have cause of wondrous thankfulness to God; yea, the most afflicted christians in the world. Suppose God had divided his mercies equally to all men in the world, as health, and wealth, and honour, and grace, and the gospel, &c. ; how little of them would have come to thy share in comparison of what thou now possessest! how many have less wealth or honour than thou! how many thousands have less of gospel and of grace! In reason therefore thy thankfulness should be proportionable and extraordinary.

Direct. IX. Compare the mercies which thou wantest, with those which thou possessest, and observe how much thy receivings are greater than thy sufferings.—Thou hast many meals' plenty, for one day of scarcity or pinching hunger; thou hast many days' health, for one day's sickness: and if one part be ill, there are more that are not; if one cross befall thee, thou escapest many more that might befall thee, and which thou deservest.

Direct. X. Bethink thee how thou wouldst value thy mercies, if thou wert deprived of them.—The want of them usually teacheth us most effectually to esteem them. Think how thou shouldst value Christ and hope, if thou wert in despair! and how thou wouldst value the mercies of earth, if thou wert in hell! and the mercies of England, if thou wert among bloody inquisitors and persecutors, and wicked,

cruel heathens or Mahometans, or brutish, savage Americans! Think how good sleep would seem to thee, if thou couldst not sleep for pains! or how good thy meat, or drink, or clothes, or house, or maintenance, or friends, would all seem to thee, if they were taken from thee! and how great a mercy health would seem, if thou wert under some tormenting sickness! and what a mercy time would seem, if death were at hand, and time were ending! and what a mercy thy least sincere desires, or measure of grace, is, in comparison of their case that are the haters, despisers, and persecutors of holiness! These thoughts, if followed home, may shame thee into thankfulness.

Direct. XI. Let heaven be ever in thine eye, and still think of the endless joy which thou shalt have with Christ.—For that is the mercy of all mercies; and he that hath not that in hope to be thankful for, will never be thankful aright for any thing; and he that hath heaven in promise to be thankful for, hath still reason for the highest, joyful thanks, whatever worldly thing he want, or though he were sure never more to have comfort in any creature upon earth. He is unthankful indeed, that will not be thankful for heaven; but that is a mercy which will constrain to thankfulness, so far as our title is discerned. The more believing and heavenly the mind is, the more thankful.

Direct. XII. Look on earthly and present mercies in connexion with heaven which is their end, and as sweetened by our interest in God that giveth them.—You leave out all the life and sweetness, which must cause your thankfulness, if you leave out God and overlook him. A dead carcass hath not the loveliness or usefulness as a living man. You mortify your mercies, when you separate them from God and heaven, and then their beauty, and sweetness, and excellency are gone; and how can you be thankful for the husks and shells, when you foolishly neglect the kernel? Take every bit as from thy Father's hands: remember that he feedeth, and clotheth, and protecteth thee, as his child: it is to "Our Father which is in heaven," that we must go every day for our "daily bread." Taste his love in it, and thou wilt say that it is sweet. Remember whither all his mercies tend, and where they will leave thee, even in the bosom of Eternal love. Think with thyself, how good is this with the love of God! this and heaven are full enough for me. Coarse fare, and coarse clothing, and coarse usage in the world, and hard labour, and a poor habitation, with heaven after all, is mercy beyond all human estimation or conceiving. Nothing can be little, which is a token of the love of God, and leadeth to eternal glory. The relation to heaven is the life and glory of every mercy.

Direct. XIII. Think oft how great a mercy it is, that thankfulness for mercy is made so great a part of thy duty.—Is it not the sweetest employment in the world to be always thinking on so sweet a thing as the mercies of God, and to be mentioning them with glad and thankful hearts? Is not this a sweeter kind of work than to be abusing mercy, and casting it away upon fleshly lusts, and sinning it away, and turning it against us? Yea, is it not a sweeter work than to be groaning under sin and misery? If God had as much fixed your thoughts upon saddening, heart-breaking objects, as he hath (by his commands) upon reviving and delighting objects, you might have thought religion a melancholy life. But when sorrow is required but as preparatory to delight, and cheerful thanksgiving is made the life and sum of your religion, who but a monster will think it grievous to live in thankfulness to our great Benefactor? To

think thus of the sweetness of it will do much to incline us to it, and make it easy to us.

Direct. XIV. Make conscience ordinarily of allowing God's mercies as great a room in thy thoughts and prayers, as thou allowest to thy sins, and wants, and troubles.—In a day of humiliation, or after some notable fall into sin, or in some special cases of distress, I confess sin and danger may have the greater share. But, ordinarily, mercy should take up more time in our remembrance and confession than our sins. Let the reasons of it first convince you, that this is your duty; and, when you are convinced, hold yourselves to the performance of it. If you cannot be so thankful as you desire, yet spend as much time in the confessing of God's mercy to you, as in confessing your sins and mentioning your wants. Thanksgiving is an effectual petitioning for more: it showeth that the soul is not drowned in selfishness, but would carry the fruit of all his mercies back to God. If you cannot think on mercy so thankfully as you would, yet see that it have a due proportion of your thoughts. This course (of allowing mercy its due time in our thoughts and prayers) would work the soul to greater thankfulness by degrees. Whereas, on the contrary, when men accustom themselves to have ten words or twenty of confession and petition for one of thanksgiving, and ten thoughts of sins, and wants, and troubles, for one of mercies, this starveth thankfulness and turneth it out of doors. You can command your words and thoughts if you will; resolve, therefore, on this duty.

Direct. XV. Take heed of a proud, a covetous, a fleshly, or a discontented mind; for all these are enemies to thankfulness.—A proud heart thinks itself the worthiest for more, and thinks diminutively of all. A covetous heart is still gaping after more, and never returning the fruit of what it hath received. A fleshly mind is an insatiable gulf of corporal mercies; like a greedy dog that is gaping for another bone when he hath devoured one, and sacrificeth all to his belly, which is his god, Phil. iii. 18. A discontented mind is always murmuring and never pleased, but findeth something still to quarrel at; and taketh more notice of the denying of its unjust desires, than of the giving of many undeserved mercies. Thankfulness prospereth not, where these vices prosper.

Direct. XVI. Avoid as much as may be a melancholy and over-fearful temper; for that will not suffer you to see or taste your greatest mercies, nor to be glad or thankful for any thing you have, but is still representing all things to you in a terrible or lamentable shape.—The grace of thankfulness may be habitually in a timorous, melancholy mind; and that appeareth in their valuation of the mercy. How glad and thankful would they be, if they were assured that the love of God is towards them! But it is next to impossible for them, ordinarily, to exercise thankfulness, because they cannot believe any thing of themselves that is good and comfortable. It is as natural for them to be still fearing, and despairing, and complaining, and troubling themselves, as for froward children to be crying, or sick men to groan. Befriend not therefore this miserable disease, but resist it by all due remedies.

Direct. XVII. Take heed of unthankful doctrines, which teach you to deny or undervalue mercy.—Such is, 1. The doctrines of the Pelagians, (whom Prosper calleth the Ungrateful,) that denied faith and special grace to be any special gift of God; and that teach you, that Peter is no more beholden to God than Judas, for his differencing grace. 2. The doctrine which denieth general grace, (which is presupposed

unto special,) and tells the world, that Christ died only for the elect, and that all the mercy of the gospel is confined to them alone; and teacheth all men to deny God any thanks for Christ or any gospel mercy, till they know that they are elect and justified; and would teach the wicked, (on earth and in hell,) that they ought not to accuse themselves for sinning against any gospel mercy, or for rejecting a Christ that died for them. 3. All doctrine which makes God the physical, efficient predeterminer of every act of the creature considered in all its circumstances; and so tells you, that saving grace is no more, nor any otherwise caused, of God, than sin and every natural act is; and our thanks that we owe him for keeping us from sin is but for not irresistible premoving us to it. Such doctrines cut the veins of thankfulness; and being not doctrines according to godliness, the life of grace and spiritual sense of believers are against them.

Direct. XVIII. Put not God off with verbal thanks, but give him thyself and all thou hast.—Thankfulness causeth the soul to inquire, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?” Psal. cxvi. 12. And it is no less than thyself and all thou hast that thou must render; that is, thou must give God not only thy tithes, and the sacrifice of Cain, but thyself to be entirely his servant, and all that thou hast to be at his command, and used in the order that he would have thee use it. A thankful soul devoteth itself to God; this is the “living, acceptable sacrifice,” Rom. xii. 1. It studieth how to do him service, and how to do good with all his mercies. Thankfulness is a powerful spring of obedience, and makes men long to be fruitful and profitable, and glad of opportunities to be serviceable to God. Thus law and gospel, obedience and gratitude, concur. A thankful obedience and an obedient thankfulness are a christian’s life. “Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows to the Most High: and call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, I will show the salvation of God,” Psal. l. 14, 15, 23.

I beseech thee now that readest these lines, be so true to God, be so ingenuous, be so much a friend to the comfort of thy soul, and so much love a life of pleasure, as to set thyself for the time to come to a more conscionable performance of this noble work; and steep thy thoughts in the abundant mercies of thy God, and express them more in all thy speech to God and man. Say as David, “O Lord, truly I am thy servant; thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord,” Psal. cxvi. 16, 17. “I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. Thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever,” Psal. xxx. 1—4, 11, 12. “I will praise the name of God with a song, and magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox,” Psal. lxxix. 30, 31. “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High; to show forth thy loving-kind-

ness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,” Psal. xcii. 1, 2. “At midnight will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments,” Psal. cxix. 62. “Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence,” Psal. cxl. 13. Remember that you are commanded “in every thing to give thanks,” 1 Thess. v. 18. When God is scant in mercy to thee, then be thou scant in thankfulness to him; and not when the devil, and a forgetful, or unbelieving, or discontented heart, would hide his greatest mercies from thee. It is just with God to give up that person to sadness of heart, and to uncomfortable, self-tormenting melancholy, that will not be persuaded by the greatness and multitude of mercies, to be frequent in the sweet returns of thanks.

Grand Direct. XV. Let thy very heart be set to glorify God, thy Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; both with the estimation of thy mind, the praises of thy mouth, and the holiness of thy life.

The glorifying of God, being the end of man and the whole creation, must be the highest duty of our lives; and therefore deserveth our distinct consideration. “Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,” 1 Cor. x. 31. “That God in all things might be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen,” 1 Pet. iv. 11. I shall therefore first show you what it is to glorify God, and then give directions how to do it.

To glorify God is not to add to his essential perfections, or felicity, or real glory.^b The glory of God is a word that is taken in these various senses: 1. Sometimes it signifieth the essential, transcendent excellencies of God in himself considered; so Rom. vi. 4; Psal. xix. 2. 2. Sometimes it signifieth that glory which the angels and saints behold in heaven: what this is, a soul in flesh cannot formally conceive or comprehend. It seemeth not to be the essence of God, because that is every where, and so is not that glory; or if any think that his essence is that glory, and is every where alike, and that the creature’s capacity is all the difference betwixt heaven and earth, he seems confuted in that the glory of heaven will be seen by the glorified body itself, which it is thought cannot see the essence of God. Whether, then, that glory be the essence of God, or any immediate emanation from his excellency, as the beams and light that are sent forth by the sun, or a created glory for the felicity of his servants, we shall know when with the blessed we enjoy it. 3. Sometimes it is taken for the appearance of God’s perfections in his creatures, either natural or free agents, as discerned by man, and for his honour in the esteem of man. John xi. 4, 40; 1 Cor. xi. 7; 2 Cor. iv. 15; Phil. i. 11; ii. 11; Isa. xxxv. 2; xl. 5, &c. And so to glorify God is, 1. Objectively, to represent his excellencies or glory; 2. Mentally, to conceive of them; 3. Verbally, to declare them. I shall therefore distinctly direct you, 1. How to glorify God in your minds. 2. By your tongues. 3. By your lives.

Directions for glorifying God with the Heart.

Direct. I. Abhor all blasphemous representations and thoughts of God, and think not of him lamely, unequally, or diminutively, nor as under any corporeal shape; nor think not to comprehend him, but reverently admire him.—Conceive of him as incomprehensible and infinite: and if Satan would tempt thee to think meanly of any thing in God, or to think

^b Heb. i. 3; Acts vii. 55; Rom. iii. 23; Rev. xxi. 11, 23;

Jude 24; 1 Pet. iv. 13; 2 Cor. iii. 18.