

A DISCOURSE
OF
THE BUILDING, NATURE, EXCELLENCY, AND GOVERNMENT
OF
THE HOUSE OF GOD;
WITH
COUNSELS AND DIRECTIONS TO THE INHABITANTS THEREOF.
BY JOHN BUNYAN, OF BEDFORD.

‘Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.’--Psalm 26:8

ADVERTISEMENT BY THE EDITOR.

Beautiful in its simplicity is this treatise on the Church of Christ, by John Bunyan. He opens, with profound knowledge and eminent skill, all those portions of sacred writ which illustrate the nature, excellency, and government of the house of God, with the personal and relative duties of its inhabitants. It was originally published in a pocket volume of sixty-three pages, by G. Larkin, 1688, and is now for the first time reprinted. We are deeply indebted to the unknown owner of this rare volume, and to Mr. Creasy, bookseller, Sleaford, through whom the copy was borrowed to enrich this edition.

What is the church? is a question upon which all the subtilty of jesuitic schoolmen and casuists has been exhausted, to mystify and mislead the honest inquirer in every age. The Jews, Papists, Greeks, English, have each claimed the divine favour as being exclusively limited to their respective sects. Apostolic descent has been considered to depend upon human ceremonies, instead of its consisting in a similarity of mind and conduct to that of the apostles, through the powerful influences of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. Judging from this latter mode, we conclude that Bunyan the brazier was very nearly related to, and descended from, Paul the tentmaker, and the other apostles. But we form a very different

judgment as to the descent of Bonner and other persecuting bishops.

A visible church of Christ is a congregation of the faithful, who having personally and individually given themselves to the Saviour, unite together to promote each other's spiritual happiness. Such were the churches to whom the epistles in the New Testament were addressed. The instructions given to this spiritual community, in the following treatise, are drawn solely from the sacred volume, and are full of peace and righteousness--tending purely to its happiness and prosperity. If these directions were strictly and constantly followed, our churches, notwithstanding the liability of the members to err, would each present ‘a little heaven below.’

The officers in these communities are--I. Bishops, or preaching elders, to dispense the word and ordinances; a plurality in every church, to supply the services of such as suffered under affliction of body, or were imprisoned for conscience-sake. II. Ruling elders, to assist the preachers--to admit the serious inquirer, or shut out the profane backslider, and to re-admit the penitent--to watch over the members, that they be diligent in their worldly callings, that there be no drones or idlers--to heal offences--to feed the church with admonitions, and to visit and comfort the sick. III. Deacons, to manage the temporal

affairs--provide for the Lord's table and for that of the bishops and elders--and to distribute the alms to the infirm and needy. IV. Female deacons, to nurse the sick, and direct their attention to that home where there shall be no more sorrow; and generally to aid the deacons and elders.

The duty of the private members is to walk humbly with God, and to be devoted to each other's happiness. In all these particulars Dr. John Cotton of New England, in his 'True Constitution of a Visible Church,'¹ fully concurs

¹ 4to, London, 1642. In the editor's library.

with Bunyan, as does also Dr. John Owen, in his 'Nature of a Gospel Church,' excepting that he is silent as to female deacons. Let every church be thus affectionately and scripturally governed, and in their works of faith and labours of love they will become terrible to the enemy 'as an army with banners' (Cant 6:4).

At the present day, great laxity of discipline has crept in. Some offices have been discontinued, others altered, and it becomes us most solemnly to judge ourselves by the unerring word of the living God, whether we have deviated from the order recorded by the Holy Ghost, and if so, to repent and return to the scriptural model.--GEO. OFFOR

A DISCOURSE OF THE BUILDING, &c., OF THE HOUSE OF GOD.

I.

BY WHOM THIS HOUSE IS BUILT.

The builder's God,² materials his Elect;
 His Son's the rock³ on which it is erect;
 The Scripture is his rule, plummet, or line,⁴
 Which gives proportion to this house divine,
 His working-tools his ordinances are,⁵
 By them he doth his stones and timber square,
 Affections knit in love, the couplings are;⁶
 Good doctrine like to mortar doth cement
 The whole together, schism to prevent:⁷
 His compass, his decree;⁸ his hand's the Spirit
 By which he frames, what he means to inherit,
 A holy temple,⁹ which shall far excel
 That very place, where now the angels dwell.

Call this a temple or a house of prayer,¹⁰
 A palace, oracle, or spouse most fair;
 Or what you will: God's love is here displayed,
 And here his treasure safely up is laid;¹¹
 For his own darling none can find a place,
 Where he, as here, is wont to show his face.

What though some slight it, it a cottage call,
 Give't the reproachful name of beggar's hall;
 Yea, what though to some it an eyesore is,
 What though they count it base, and at it hiss,
Call it an alms-house, builded for the poor;
Yet kings of old have begged at the door.

² I Cor. 3:9.

³ Isa. 8:14.

⁴ Rom. 14:25.

⁵ Eph. 4:11, 12, 16.

⁶ Col. 2:2, 19.

⁷ Lev. 14:42.

⁸ Acts 13:4, 48.

⁹ Eph. 2:19-22.

¹⁰ Matt. 21:13.

¹¹ Ps. 27:4.

II.

OF THE BEAUTY OF THE CHURCH.

Lo her foundations laid with sapphires are;
 Her goodly windows made of agates fair,
 Her gates are carbuncles, or pearls; nor one
 Of all her borders but's a precious stone;¹²
 None common, nor o' th' baser sort are here,
 Nor rough, but squar'd and polish'd
 everywhere;
 Her beams are cedars, fir her rafters be,
 Her terraces are of the algum-tree;¹³
 The thorn or crab-tree here are not of us;
 Who thinks them here utensils, puts abuse
 Upon the place, yea, on the builder too;
 Would they be thus controll'd in what they do?
 With carved-work of lily, and palm-tree,
 With cherubims and chains adorned be
 The doors, the walls, and pillars of this place;¹⁴
 Forbidden beasts here must not show their face.
 With grace like gold, as with fine painting, he
 Will have this house within enriched be;
 Fig-leaves nor rags, must here keep out no cold,
 This builder covers all with cloth of gold,
 Of needle-work prick'd more than once or
 twice
 (The oft'ner prick'd, still of the higher price)¹⁵
 Wrought by his SON, put on her by his merit,
 Applied by faith, revealed by the Spirit.¹⁶

III.

OF THE CONVENIENCES OF THIS HOUSE.

Within these walls the builder did devise
 That there the householders might sacrifice;
 Here is an altar,¹⁷ and a laver too,¹⁸
 And priests abundance,¹⁹ temple work to do;

¹² Isa. 54:11, 12.

¹³ II Chr. 9:11.

¹⁴ I Kgs. 6:35.

¹⁵ Ps. 45:13, 14.

¹⁶ Rom. 1:17.

¹⁷ Heb. 13:10, 15.

¹⁸ Tit. 3:5.

¹⁹ Pet. 2:9.

Nor want they living offerings, nor yet fire,
 Nor holy garments; what divine desire
 Commands, it has bestowed on this place;
 Here be the censors, here's the throne of grace;
 None of the householders need go elsewhere,
 To offer incense, or good news to hear.

A throne for judgment he did here erect,²⁰
 Virtue to cherish, folly to detect;²¹
 Statutes and laws, unto this house he gave,
 To teach who to condemn, and who to save:
 By things thus wholesome taught is every
 brother
 To fear his God, and to love one another.

And now for pleasure, solace, recreation,
 Here's such as helpeth forward man's salvation.
 Equal to these none can be found elsewhere,
 All else turn to profuseness, sin, and care.
 So situate it is, so roomy, fair,
 So warm, so blessed, with such wholesome air,
 That 'tis enticing: whoso wishes well
 To his soul's health, should covet here to dwell.
 Here's necessaries, and what will delight
 The godly ear, the palate, with the sight
 Of each degree and sex; here's everything
 To please a beggar, and delight a king.
 Chambers²² and galleries,²³ he did invent,
 Both for a prospect and a retirement.
 For such as unto music do incline,
 Here are both harps and psalteries divine:²⁴
 Her cellars and banqueting-house²⁵ have been,
 In former days, a palace for a queen.
 O house! what title to thee can be given,
 So fit as that which men do give to heaven!

²⁰ Rev. 16:17.

²¹ I Cor. 6:3, 4.

²² Can. 1:4.

²³ Can. 7:5.

²⁴ II Chr. 9:11.

²⁵ Can. 2:4.

IV.

OF THE STRENGTH AND DEFENCE OF THIS HOUSE.

This house, you may be sure, will always stand;
 She's builded on a rock,²⁶ not on the sand;
 Storms, rain, yea floods have oft upon her beat,
 Yet stands she,²⁷ here's a proof she is no cheat;
 Fear not therefore in her for to abide,
 She keeps her ground, come weather, wind or
 tide.

Her corner-stone has many times been try'd,
 But never could the scorn, or rage, or pride,
 Of all her foes, by what force they could make,
 Destroy her battlements, or ground-work
 shake.²⁸

Here's God the Lord encamping round about
 His dwelling place;²⁹ nor ought we once to
 doubt

But that he as a watchman succour will
 Those that do dwell upon his holy hill.³⁰
*A wall of fire about her I will be,
 And glory in the midst of her, and she
 Shall be the place where I my name record;
 Here I will come and bless you, saith the Lord.*

The holy watchers at her gates do stand,
 With their destroying weapons in their hand,
 Those to defend, that in this house do dwell,
 From all her enemies in earth and hell;³¹
 Safety! where is it, if it is not here?
 God dwelleth in her,³² doth for her appear,
 To help her early,³³ and her foes confound,
 And unto her will make his grace abound;
*Safety is here, and also that advance,³⁴
 Will make a beggar sing, a cripple dance.*

²⁶ Matt. 16:18.

²⁷ Luke 6:48.

²⁸ Isa. 28:16.

²⁹ Zech. 2:5; 9:8.

³⁰ Exod. 20:24.

³¹ Rev. 21:12.

³² Ps. 48:3.

³³ Ps. 46:1, 5.

³⁴ 'That advance,' preferment, or progress towards
 perfection.--Ed.

V.

THE DELICATENESS OF THE SITUATION
OF THIS HOUSE.

As her foundation and her beauty's much;
Conveniences, and her defences such
As none can parallel, so doth the field
About her richest, rarest dainties yield.
Moriah, where Isaac was offered,
Where David from his sin was ransomed;
Where Solomon the temple did erect,
Compar'd with this is worthy no respect.

Under the very threshold of this place
Arise those goodly springs of lasting grace,
Whose crystal streams minister like to those
That here of love to her, make their repose.³⁵

Sweet is her aid, (as one may well infer)
'Cause 'tis the breathings of the comforter.³⁶

The pomegranates at all her gates do grow,
Mandrakes and vines, with other dainties mo;³⁷
Her gardens yield the chief, the richest spice,
Surpassing them of Adam's paradise.³⁸
Here be sweet ointments, and the best of gums;
Here runs the milk, here drops the honey-
combs.

Here are perfumes most pleasant to the sense,
Here grows the goodly trees of frankincense;
Her arbours, walks, fountains, and pleasant
springs,
Delightful formerly have been to kings.

Such mountains round about this house do
stand

As one from thence may see the holy land.³⁹
Her fields are fertile, do abound with corn;
The lilies fair, her vallies do adorn.⁴⁰
The birds that do come hither every spring,
For birds, they are the very best that sing.⁴¹

³⁵ Ezek. 47:1.

³⁶ Can. 1:7, 12, 13.

³⁷ 'Mo,' a usual contraction for more in former times,
now obsolete.--Ed.

³⁸ Can. 4:12-16.

³⁹ Ps. 125:2.

⁴⁰ Can. 2:1.

⁴¹ Can. 2:11, 12.

Her friends, her neighbours too, do call her
blest;⁴²

Angels do here go by, turn in and rest.⁴³

The road to paradise lies by her gate,⁴⁴
Here pilgrims do themselves accommodate
With bed and board, and do such stories tell
As do for truth and profit all excel.

Nor doth the porter here say any nay,
That hither would turn in, that there would
stay.

*This house is rent-free; here the man may dwell
That loves his landlord, rules his passions well.*

VI.

THE WAY OF RECEIVING THOSE THAT
WOULD HERE INHABIT.

And wouldst thou know the customs of this
place,

How men are here admitted to this grace;
And consequently whether thou mayst be
Made one of this most blest fraternity?
Come hither then, unto me lend an ear;
And what is doubtful to thee, I will clear.

1. This place, as mercy's arms, stands ope to
those

That their own happiness us'd to oppose;
Those under hedges, high-way men,⁴⁵ or they
That would not God, nor yet good men obey;⁴⁶
Those that among the bushes us'd to browse,
Or under hedges us'd themselves to louze.
The vilest men, of sinners who are chief,
A fornicator, liar, or a thief,
May turn in hither, here take up and dwell
With those who ransom'd are from death and
hell.⁴⁷

2. This place, as hospitals, will entertain,
Those which the lofty of this world disdain:⁴⁸

⁴² Ps. 48:2.

⁴³ Heb. 13:2.

⁴⁴ Gen. 28:17.

⁴⁵ Luke 14:23.

⁴⁶ II Tim. 1:15.

⁴⁷ I Cor. 6:9-11.

⁴⁸ Ezek. 34:16.

The poor, the lame, the maimed, halt and blind,⁴⁹
 The leprous, and possessed⁵⁰ too, may find
 Free welcome here, as also such relief
 As ease them will of trouble, pain and grief.

3. This place, as David's heart, with free consent
 Opens to th' distressed, and the discontent;⁵¹
 Who is in debt, that has not wherewithal
 To quit his scores, may here be free from thrall:⁵²

That man that fears the bailiff, or the jail,
 May find one here that will become his bail.

4. Art thou bound over to the great assize,
 For heark'ning to the devil and his lies;
 Art thou afraid thereat to shew thy head,
 For fear thou then be sent unto the dead?
 Thou may'st come hither, here is room and place,
 For such as willingly would live by grace.⁵³

5. This place, as father's house in former days,
 Is a receptacle for runaways;⁵⁴
 He that, like to the ox,⁵⁵ backslidden is,
 Forfeited hath for sin his share of bliss;
 May yet come hither, here is room and rest;
 Of old such have come hither and been blest.
 Had this been false, O woe had been to David!
 Nor Peter⁵⁶ had, nor Magdalen, been saved.
 Nor Jonah,⁵⁷ nor Manasseh,⁵⁸ nor the rest;
 No runaway from God could be blest

⁴⁹ Luke 14:21.

⁵⁰ Mark 16:9.

⁵¹ I Sam. 22:2.

⁵² Luke 7:41, 42.

⁵³ Acts 16:30-32.

⁵⁴ Probably referring to the parable of the prodigal son, Luke 15.--Ed.

⁵⁵ This may refer to the Levitical law, Exodus 21:28-36. The ox that had gored any one to death, 'shall be surely stoned' without possibility of escape, but the backslider or manslayer, although he lie equally under the sentence of death, yet may escape to the city of refuge.--Ed.

⁵⁶ Luke 22:61.

⁵⁷ Jonah 1.

⁵⁸ II Chr. 33.

With kind reception at his hands; return
 Would here come too late, if nought but burn
 Had been the lot of the backsliding man:
 But we are told there's no rebellion can
 Prevent, or hinder him from being saved,
 That mercy heartily of God hath crav'd.⁵⁹
 She that went from her God to play the
 whore,⁶⁰

Returning may be as she was before:
 He that refuses to his God to turn,
 That is resolved in hell fire to burn;
 If he bethinks himself, and turns again,
 May find them here that will him entertain.⁶¹

6. But bring thou with thee a certificate,
 To show thou seest thyself most desolate;
 Writ by the master, with repentance seal'd,⁶²
 To shew also that here thou would'st be heal'd,
 By those fair leaves of that most blessed tree,
 By which alone poor sinners healed be;⁶³
 And that thou dost abhor thee for thy ways.
 And wouldst in holiness spend all thy days;
*And here be entertained; or thou wilt find
 To entertain thee here are none inclin'd.*⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Luke 15; I Sam. 12.

⁶⁰ Jer. 3:1-6.

⁶¹ Rom. 10:21.

⁶² Acts 9:26, 27.

⁶³ Rev. 21:27.

⁶⁴ These stanzas afford an excellent illustration to the meaning of Bunyan in his Pilgrim's Progress, where Christian, before the cross, receives the roll or certificate--loses it for a season in the arbour on the hill Difficulty, when loitering and sleeping on his way to the Interpreter's house, but regains it by repentance and prayers, and eventually, having crossed the river, gives it in at the gate of the Celestial City, and is admitted.--Ed.

VII.

OF THE GOVERNORS OF THIS HOUSE.

The governors that here in office are,
Such be as service do with love and care;
Not swerving from the rule, nor yet intrude
Upon each other's work, nor are they rude
In managing their own: but to their trust
They labour to be honest, faithful, just.

1. The chief is he who is the Lord of all,
The Saviour;⁶⁵ some him physician call.
He's cloth'd in shining raiment to the ground,
A golden girdle doth begirt him round;
His head and hairs are white as any snow,
His eyes are like a flame of fire also;
His feet are like fine brass, as if they burn'd
Within a furnace, or to fire were turn'd;
His voice doth like to many waters sound;
In his right hand, seven glittering stars are
found.

Out of his mouth goes a two-edged sword,
Sharper than any ('tis his holy word)
And for his countenance, 'tis as the sun
Which shineth in its strength, till day is done.⁶⁶
His name is call'd holy, The WORD OF
GOD;⁶⁷

The wine-press of his father's wrath he trod;
At all the power of sin he doth deride,
The keys of hell and death hang at his side.⁶⁸

This is our governor, this is the chief,
From this physician comes our soul's relief.
He is the tree of life and hidden manna;
'Tis he to whom the children sing hosanna.
The white stone he doth give with a new name;
In heaven and earth he is of worthy fame.
This man hath death destroy'd and slain the
devil,

And doth secure all his from damning evil.
*He is the prince of life, the prince of peace;
He doth us from the bonds of death release.
His work is properly his own; nor may,
In what he doth, another say him nay.*

⁶⁵ Heb. 3:6.

⁶⁶ Rev. 1:12-17.

⁶⁷ Rev. 19:13.

⁶⁸ Rev. 1:18.

'Tis he who pays our hospitarian scores,
He's here to search, supple, and bind up sores;
He is our plaster-maker, he applies
Them to our wounds,⁶⁹ he wipes our wetted
eyes.⁷⁰

'Tis he that gives us cups of consolation,
'Tis he renews the hopes of our salvation.⁷¹

He'll take our parts, oft times to us
unknown,
And make as if our failings were his own;
He'll plead with God his name and doings
too,
And save us will, from those would us undo.

His name is as an ointment poured forth;
'Tis sweet from east to west, from south to
north.

He's white and ruddy; yea of all the chief;
His golden head is rich beyond belief.

His eyes are like the doves which waters wet,
Well wash'd with milk, and also fitly set,
His cheeks as beds of spices, and sweet
flowers.

He us'd to water with those crystal showers,
Which often flowed from his cloudy eyes;
Better by far than what comes from the skies.
His lips like lilies, drop sweet-smelling
myrrh,

Scenting as do those of the comforter.
His hands are as gold rings set with the
beryls;

By them we are delivered out of perils;
His legs like marble, stand in boots of gold,
His countenance is ex'lent to behold.

His mouth, it is of all a mouth most sweet,⁷²
O kiss me then, Lord, every time we meet!⁷³
Thy sugar'd lips, Lord, let them sweeten mine,
With the most blessed scent of things divine.

2. This is one Governor; and next in place,
One call'd the Ghost, in Honour and in Grace
No whit inferior to him; and HE
Will also in this house our helper be,

⁶⁹ Luke 10:33-35.

⁷⁰ Matt. 8:17.

⁷¹ Luke 22:31,32.

⁷² Can. 5:10-16.

⁷³ Can. 1:2-3.

He 'twas who did at first brood the creation;⁷⁴
 And he's the cause of man's regeneration.
 'Tis he by whom the heavens were garnished,
 With all their host they then abroad did spread
 (Like spangles, pearls, diamonds or richest
 gems)

Far richer than the fairest diadems.⁷⁵
 'Twas he who with his cloven tongues of fire
 Made all those wise ones of the world admire,
 Who heard his breathing in unlearned men.⁷⁶
 O blessed ruler! now the same as then!
 His work our mind is to illuminate
 With things divine, and to accommodate
 Us with those graces, which will us adorn,
 And make us look like men indeed new-born.⁷⁷
 For our inheritance he makes us meet;
 He makes us also in this world discreet.
 Prudent and wise in what we take in hand,
 To do and suffer at our Lord's command.⁷⁸

'Tis he that leads us to the tomb and cross,
 Where Jesus crucified and buried was;
 He shews us also, that he did revive,
 And doth assure us that he is alive;
 And doth improve the merit of his blood,
 At grace's throne for our eternal good.

Dark riddles he doth here to us unfold,
 Yea, makes us things invisible behold.⁷⁹

He sheds abroad God's love in every heart,
 Where he doth dwell, yea to them doth impart,
 Such tokens of a future happiness,
 That's past the tongue of angels to express.⁸⁰

'Tis he which helpeth us, *that* to perform,
 Whether becalm'd, or whether in a storm,
 Which God commands:⁸¹ without him we do
 nought
 That's good, either in deed, or word, or
 thought.⁸²

⁷⁴ Can. 1:1, 2.

⁷⁵ Job 26:13.

⁷⁶ Acts 2:1-4.

⁷⁷ Eph. 1:18-20.

⁷⁸ Mark 13:11; John 16:13.

⁷⁹ I Cor. 14:2.

⁸⁰ Rom. 5:5.

⁸¹ Rom. 8:26, 27

⁸² II Cor. 3:4.

'Tis he that doth with jewels us bedeck,
 'Tis he puts chains of gold about our neck;
 'Tis he that doth us with fine linen gird,⁸³
 That maketh us oftentimes live as a bird.
 That cureth us of all our doubts and fears,⁸⁴
 Puts bracelets on our hands, rings on our ears;
 He sanctifies our persons,⁸⁵ he perfumes
 Our spirits also; he our lust consumes;⁸⁶
 Our stinking breath he sweetens, so that we
 To God and all good men sweet-scented be;⁸⁷
 He sets God's mark upon us, and doth seal
 Us unto life, and life to us reveal.

VIII.

UNDER OFFICERS.

3. Another sort of officers here are,
 But such as must not with these first compare;
 They're under-officers, but serviceable,
 Not only here to rule, but wait at table.
 Those clothed are with linen, fine and white,
 They glitter as the stars of darksome night.⁸⁸
 They have Saint Peter's keys,⁸⁹ and Aaron's rod;
 They ope and shut, they bind and loose for
 God.
 The chief of these are watchmen, they have
 power
 To mount on high and to ascend the tower
 Of this brave fabric, and from thence to see
 Who keeps their ground, and who the stragglers
 be.
 These have their trumpet, when they do it
 sound
 The mountains echo, yea it shakes the ground.
 With it they also sound out an alarm,⁹⁰
 When they perceive the least mischief or harm
 Is coming, so they do this house secure
 There from, or else prepare it to endure

⁸³ Ezek. 16:10-14.

⁸⁴ Rom. 15:13.

⁸⁵ I Cor. 6:11.

⁸⁶ Isa. 4:4.

⁸⁷ Col. 4:6.

⁸⁸ Rev. 1:20.

⁸⁹ Matt. 16:19.

⁹⁰ Ezek. 33:3-6.

Most manfully the cross, and so attain
The crown which for the victor doth remain.

This officer is call'd a steward too,⁹¹
'Cause with his master's cash he has to do,
And has authority it to disburse
To those that want, or for that treasure thirst.⁹²
The distributor of the word of grace
He is, and at his mouth, when he's in place,
They seek the law, he also bids them do it;
He shews them sin, and learns them to eschew
it.⁹³

By this example too he shews them how
To keep their garments clean, their knees to
bow
Before the king, when he comes into place;
And when they do him supplicate for grace.⁹⁴

Another bade this officer doth wear,
Is that of overseer; because the care
Of the whole house is with him, he's to see
They nothing want, nor yet abused be
By false intruders, doctrines, or (perchance)
By the misplacing of an ordinance.⁹⁵
These also are to see they wander not
From place or duty, lest they get a blot
To their profession, or bring some disease
Upon the whole, or get a trick to lease,
Or lie unto their God,⁹⁶ by doing what
By sacred statutes he commanded not.
Call them your cooks, they're skill'd in dressing
food
To nourish weak, and strong, and cleanse the
blood:
They've milk for babes, strong meat for men of
age;
Food fit for who are simple, who are sage,⁹⁷

⁹¹ I Cor. 4:1.

⁹² I Pet. 4:10.

⁹³ Luke 12:42.

⁹⁴ Titus 1:7.

⁹⁵ Bunyan considered that baptism is to *follow* belief, and that christening a child was a misplacing the ordinance. So also with he Lord's Supper--that it was to be a *public* showing forth the death of the Saviour, and if administered in private, or with any other view, it was misplaced.--Ed.

⁹⁶ Acts 20:28

⁹⁷ Luke 12:42

When the great pot goes on, as oft it doth,
They put not coloquintida⁹⁸ in broth,⁹⁹
As do those younglings, fondlings of their skill,
Who make not what's so apt to cure as kill.

They are your sub-physicians, and know
What sickness you are incident unto;¹⁰⁰
Let them but feel your pulse, and they will tell
You quickly whether you are sick or well.
Have you the staggers? They can help you
there;

Or if the falling-sickness, or do fear
A lethargy, a fever, or the gout,
God blessing of their skill, you need not doubt
A cure, for long experience has made
These officers the masters of their trade.¹⁰¹
Their physic works by purge¹⁰² and vomit too,¹⁰³
Fear not, nor full nor fasting but 'twill do,
Have but a care, and see you catch no cold,
And with their physic then you may be bold.

You may them Prophets call, for they can tell
Of things to come, yea, here they do excel.¹⁰⁴
They prophesy of man's future event,
Whether to weal or woe his mind is bent,
Yea, so expert are they in their predictions,
Their arguments so full are of convictions,

⁹⁸ It is a rare thing for Bunyan to use a foreign word; but all pious persons in his time were familiar with, and generally used, the Puritan or Genevan Bible, vulgarly called the Breeches Bible, an extremely valuable book; in the marginal notes of which, on this passage is the following explanation, "wilde gourdes," which the apotaries call coloquintida, and is most vehement and dangerous in purging.--Ed.

⁹⁹ II Kg. 4:38-40.

¹⁰⁰ Matt. 10:8.

¹⁰¹ The university or college in which Bunyan so highly graduated, is the only one where ministers can be instructed in this spiritual physic. It is Christ's college or school, neither at Oxford or Cambridge, but in the Bible. There, and there *only*, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, can the Christian bishop or under shepherd receive instruction in the precious remedies against Satan's devices, or in specifics to cure spiritual maladies.--Ed.

¹⁰² Heb. 9:14.

¹⁰³ II Pet. 2:22.

¹⁰⁴ Acts 15:32.

That none who hear them, but are forced to
say,
Woe unto them who wander from the way.¹⁰⁵
Art bound for hell against all wind and
weather?
Or art thou one a going backward thither?
Or dost thou wink, because thou would'st not
see?
Or dost thou sideling go, and would'st not be
Suspected? Yet these prophets can thee tell,
Which way thou art a going down to hell.¹⁰⁶
For him that would eternal life attain,
Yet will not part with all, that life to gain,
But keepeth some thing close, he should
forsake,
Or slips the time, in which he should awake;
Or saith he lets go all, yet keepeth some
Of what will make him lose the world to
come.¹⁰⁷
*These prophets can tell such a man his state,
And what at last will surely be his fate.*
If thou art one who tradeth in both ways,
God's now, the devil's then; or if delays
Thou mak'st of coming to thy God for life;
Or if thy light, and lusts are at a strife
About who should be master of thy soul,
And lovest one, the other dost control;¹⁰⁸
These prophets tell thee can, which way thou
bendest,
On which thou frown'st, to which a hand thou
lendest.
Art one of those whose fears do go beyond
Their faith? when thou should'st hope, dost
thou despond?
Dost keep thine eye upon what thou hast done,
And yet hast licence to look on the sun?¹⁰⁹
Dost thou so covet more, as not to be
Affected with the grace bestowed on thee?
Art like to him, that needs must step a mile
At every stride,¹¹⁰ or think it not worth while

¹⁰⁵ I Cor. 14:31.

¹⁰⁶ Acts 8:20-22.

¹⁰⁷ II Tim. 3:6.

¹⁰⁸ Tit. 1:16.

¹⁰⁹ Luke 22:32.

¹¹⁰ Can. 1:4.

To follow Christ? These prophets they can tell
To cure this thy disease, and make thee well.

This officer is also call'd a guide,
Nor should the people but keep by his side;
Or tread his steps in all the paths they walk,
By his example they should do and talk.
He is to be to them instead of eyes,
He must before them go in any wise;
And he must lead them by the water side,
This is the work of this our Faithful Guide.
Since snares, and traps, and gins are for us set,
Since here's a hole, and there is spread a net,
*O let no body at my muse deride,
No man can travel here without a guide.*¹¹¹
Here's tempting apples, here are baited hooks,
With turning, twisting, cramping, tangling
crooks
Close by the way; woe then to them betide,
*That dare to venture here without a guide.*¹¹²
Here haunt the fairies with their chanting voice;
Fiends like to angels, to bewitch our choices;
Baits for the flesh lie here on every side:
Who dares set here one foot without a guide?
Master delusion dwelleth by our walks,
Who with confusion, sings and prays and talks;
He says the straight path's his, and ours the
wide:¹¹³
What then can we do here without a guide
Let God then give our leaders always eyes;
Yea, let him make them holy, bold, and wise;
And help us fast by them for to abide,
And suffer not the blind to be our guide.
4. Here are of rulers, yet another sort,
Such as direct our manners to comport
With our professed faith, that we to view,
May let beholders know that we are *new*.¹¹⁴
These are our conversations to inspect,
And us in our employments to direct,
That we in faith and love do every thing,
That reacheth from the peasant to the king.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Luke 1:79.

¹¹² Ps. 78:72.

¹¹³ Matt. 23:16, 24.

¹¹⁴ Rom. 12:8.

¹¹⁵ I Cor. 12:28.

That there may be no scandal in our ways,
 Nor yet in our profession all our days.¹¹⁶
 These should after our busy-bodies look,
 Tale-bearers also, they have undertook
 To keep in order, also they must see
 None that can work among us idle be;
 Jars, discords, frauds, with grievances and
 wrongs,
 These they're to regulate; to them belongs
 The judgment of all matters of this kind,¹¹⁷
 And happy is the house thus disciplined.¹¹⁸

5. Another sort of officers we have,
 Deacons we call them 'cause their work's to
 save
 And distribute those crumbs of charity
 Unto the poor, for their subsistency,
 That contributed is for their relief,
 Which of their bus'ness is indeed the chief.¹¹⁹
 These must be grave, not of a double tongue,
 Not given to wine, not apt to do a wrong
 Unto the poor, through love to lucre. (Just
 In this their office, faithful to their trust)¹²⁰
 The wife must answer here as face doth face;
 The husband's fitness to his work and place,
 That ground of scandal or of jealousy
 Obstructs not proof that he most zealously
 Performs his office well, for then shall he
 Be bold in faith, and get a good degree
 Of credit with the church; yea what is more,
He shall possess the blessings of the poor.
 His wisdom teach him will, to find out who
 Is poor of idleness, and who comes to
 A low estate by sickness, age, or 'cause
 The want of limbs, or sight, or work it was
 That brought them to it; or such destiny
 As sometimes maketh low, who once were high.
 They must remember too, that some there are
 Who halt before they're lame, while others care
*Not to make known their want, they'll rather
 die,
 Than charge the churches with their poverty.*

¹¹⁶ I Thess. 5:12-14.

¹¹⁷ I Cor. 6:4.

¹¹⁸ I Tim. 5:17.

¹¹⁹ Acts 6:1-6.

¹²⁰ I Tim. 3:8.

This done, they must bestow as they see cause;
 Making the word the rule, and want the laws
 By which they act, and then they need not
 pause.¹²¹

The table of the Lord, he also must
 Provide for, 'tis his duty and his trust.¹²²
 The teacher too should have his table spread
 By him; thus should his house be clad and fed;
 Thus he serves tables with the church's stock,
 And so becomes a blessing to the flock.¹²³

I read of widows also that should be
 Employed here for further decency;
 I dare not say they are in office, though
 A service here they are appointed to:
 They must be very aged,¹²⁴ trusty, meek,
 Such who have done much good, that do not
 seek

Themselves; they must be humble, pitiful,
 Or they will make their service void and null.
 These are to teach the younger women what
 Is proper to their sex and state, what not:
 To be discreet, keepers at home, and chaste;
 To love their husbands, to be good;
 shamefac'd:¹²⁵

Children to bear, to love them, and to fly
 What to the gospel would be infamy.
 I think those to the sick should look also,
 A work unfit for younger ones to do.
 Wherefore he saith, The younger ones refuse;
 Perhaps because their weakness would abuse

¹²¹ Acts 6:1.

¹²² Acts 6:2.

¹²³ These hints to deacons are invaluable. They must have been the result of long intimacy and enlightened watchfulness over the conduct of the poor. To distinguish between the noisy beggar and the unobtrusive sufferer--to administer relief in just proportions, 'the *word* the rule, and *want* the law,' in spite of all that influence which is constantly brought to bear upon those who distribute any common charity fund. It requires much of the fear of God in the heart, and a solemn sense of responsibility at the great day. The terms, 'crumbs of charity,' are beautifully expressive of the general poverty of Christian churches.--Ed.

¹²⁴ I Tim. 5:9.

¹²⁵ Tit. 2:3-5.

Them, and subject them unto great disgrace,¹²⁶
 When such a one as Amnon is in place.¹²⁷
 And since the good old woman this must do
 'Tis fit she should be fed and clothed too,
Out of the deacon's purse, let it so be;
And let this be her service constantly.^{128 129}

IX.

THE ORDER AND MANNER OF THE
GOVERNMENT HERE.

As I have shew'd you who in office are,
 So I will tell you how, and with what care
 Those here intrusted with the government,
 Keep to the statutes made to that intent.
 By rules divine this house is governed;¹³⁰
 Not sanguinary ones, nor taught nor fed
 By human precepts:¹³¹ for the scripture saith,
 The word's our ghostly food; food for our
 faith.¹³²

Nor are all forced to the same degree
 In things divine, tho' all exhorted be
 To the most absolute proficiency
 That law or duty can to them descry.¹³³

Alas! here's children, here are great with young;
 Here are the sick and weak, as well as strong.

¹²⁶ I Tim. 5:11.

¹²⁷ II Sam. 13:6-14.

¹²⁸ I Tim. 5:16.

¹²⁹ Bunyan's idea of this scriptural order of female deacons is very striking, and worthy the solemn consideration of all Christian churches. They are to be chosen from such as are 'widows indeed, who trust in God, and continue in supplications and prayers night and day,' 1 Timothy 5:5. They are to devote themselves to the sick--to be patterns of good works--and, if needful, to be fed and clothed at the expense of the church, verse 16. If to this were added to examine and educate the children, they might be most eminently useful.--Ed.

¹³⁰ Matt. 28:18-20.

¹³¹ Luke 9:54-56.

¹³² Col. 2:20-22.

¹³³ Phil. 3:17.

Here are the cedar, shrub, and bruised reed;¹³⁴
 Yea, here are such who wounded are, and
 bleed.

As here are some who in their grammar be,¹³⁵
 So here are others in their A, B, C.
 Some apt to teach, and others hard to learn;
 Some see far off, others can scarce discern
 That which is set before them in the glass;
 Others forgetful are, and so let pass,
 Or slip out of their mind what they did hear¹³⁶
 But now; so great our differences appear
 Wherefore our Jacob's must have special care
 They drive their flocks, but as their flocks can
 bear;¹³⁷

For if they be o'erdriven, presently
 They will be sick, or cast their young, or die.¹³⁸
 The laws therefore are more and less of force,
 According as they bring us to the source,
 Or head, or fountain, or are more remote
 To what at first we should ourselves devote.
 Be we then wise in handling of the laws,
 Not making a confused noise like daws
 In chambers, yea let us seek to excel,¹³⁹
 To each man's profit; this is ruling well.¹⁴⁰
 With fundamentals then let us begin,
 For they strike at the very root of sin.
 So the foundation being strongly laid,
 Let us go on, as the wise builder said,¹⁴¹
 For I don't mean, we should at all disdain
 Those that are less, we always should maintain
 That due respect to either which is meet;
 This is the way to sit at Jesus' feet.¹⁴²

Repent I must, or I am cast away;¹⁴³
 Believe I must, or nothing I obey.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁴ John 2:1-6

¹³⁵ Eph. 3:18, 19.

¹³⁶ Heb. 5:12, 13.

¹³⁷ Isa. 40:11.

¹³⁸ Gen. 33:13.

¹³⁹ I Cor. 14:12.

¹⁴⁰ I Cor. 14:26.

¹⁴¹ Heb. 6:1-3.

¹⁴² Matt. 28:19, 26.

¹⁴³ Luke 13:1-3.

¹⁴⁴ Mark 16:16.

Love God I must, or nothing I can do,
That's worth so much as loosing of my shoe.
If I do not, bear after Christ, my cross;¹⁴⁵
If love to holiness is at a loss;
If I my lusts seek not to mortify;¹⁴⁶
If to myself, my flesh, I do not die;
What law, should I observe't, can do me good?
In little duties life hath never stood.

One reads, he prays, he catechises too;
But doth he nothing else, what doth he do?
I read to know my duty,¹⁴⁷ I do pray
To God to help me do it day by day;¹⁴⁸
If this be not my end in what I do,
I am a sot, an hypocrite also.¹⁴⁹
I am baptiz'd, what then?¹⁵⁰ unless I die
To sin, I cover folly with a lie.
At the Lord's table, I do eat; what though?
There some have eat their own damnation
too.¹⁵¹

I will suppose, I hear, I sing, I pray,
And that I am baptiz'd without delay,
I will suppose I do much knowledge get,
And will also suppose that I am fit
To be a preacher, yet nought profits me
If to the first, poor I a stranger be:¹⁵²
They are more weighty therefore; in compare
These unto them, but mint and anise are.¹⁵³

Not that I would the least of duty slight,
Because the least command, of divine right,
Requires that I myself subject thereto;
Willful resisters do themselves undo.
But let's keep order, let the first be first;
Repent, believe, and love; and then I trust
I have that right, which is divine, to all
That is enjoined; be they great or small.

¹⁴⁵ Luke 14:27.

¹⁴⁶ Heb. 12:14.

¹⁴⁷ John 5:39.

¹⁴⁸ Luke 20:47.

¹⁴⁹ Matt. 6:5.

¹⁵⁰ Acts 8:13, 23.

¹⁵¹ I Cor. 11:29.

¹⁵² I Cor. 13:1-4.

¹⁵³ Matt. 23:23.

Only I must as cautionary speak,
In one word more, a little to the weak;
Thou must not suffer men so to enclose
Thee in their judgments, as to discompose
Thee in that faith and peace thou hast with
him;
This would be like the losing of a limb;
Or like to him who thinks he doth not well,
Unless he lose the kernel for the shell.
Thou art no captive, but a child and free;
Thou wast not made for laws, but laws for
thee;
And thou must use them as thy light will bear
it;
They that say otherwise, do rend and tear it,
More like to wicked tyrants, who are cruel,
And add unto a little fire, more fuel.
But those who are true shepherds of the sheep,
To quench such burnings would most gladly
weep.

But I am yet but upon generals;
Particulars our legislator calls
For at our hands, and that in order to
Consummate what we have begun to do.

1. My brother I must love, in very deed.¹⁵⁴
I'm taught of God to do it:¹⁵⁵ let me heed
This divine duty, and perform it well,
Who loves his brother, God in him doth
dwell;¹⁵⁶

*The argument which on me this imposes,
Smells like to ointment, or the sweetest roses.*¹⁵⁷
Shall God love, shall he keep his faith to me?
And shall not I? shall I unfaithful be?
Shall God love me a sinner? and shall I
Not love a saint?¹⁵⁸ Yea, shall my Jesus die
To reconcile me to my God? and shall
I hate his child, nor hear his wants that call
For my little assisting of him?¹⁵⁹ fie
On such a spirit, on such cruelty;¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁴ John 15:17.

¹⁵⁵ I Thess. 4:9.

¹⁵⁶ I John 4:16.

¹⁵⁷ Ps. 133.

¹⁵⁸ John 15:17.

¹⁵⁹ I Thess. 4:9; I John 4:16; Ps. 133.

¹⁶⁰ I John 4:20, 21.

*Fie on the thought that would me alienate,
Or tempt me my worst enemy to hate.*^{161 162}

2. He that dwells here, must also be a sharer
In others' griefs;¹⁶³ must be a burden-bearer
Among his brethren, or he cannot do
That which the blessed gospel calls him to.¹⁶⁴
In order hereunto, humility
Must be put on, it is our livery,
We must be clothed with it, if we will
The law obey, our master's mind fulfil.¹⁶⁵
If this be so, then what should they do here,
Who in their antic pranks of pride appear?
Let lofty men among you bear no sway,
The Lord beholds the proud man far away.¹⁶⁶
It is not fit that he inhabit there
Where humbleness of mind should have the
chair.
Can pride be where a soul for mercy craves?¹⁶⁷
Shall pride be found among redeemed slaves?¹⁶⁸
Shall he who mercy from the gallows brought,
Look high, or strut, or entertain a thought
That tends to tempt him to forget that fate,
To which for sin he destin'd was of late,
*And could not then at all delivered be,
But by another's death and misery?*¹⁶⁹
Pride is the unbecom'gst thing of all:
Besides, 'tis the forerunner of a fall.
He that is proud, soon in the dirt will lie,¹⁷⁰
But honour followeth humility.
Let each then count his brother as his better,
Let each esteem himself another's debtor.

¹⁶¹ Matt. 5:43-48.

¹⁶² These instructions are like 'apples of gold in pictures of silver.' Thrice happy are those churches whose members act in conformity with these scriptural rules. But is there a member who dares to violate them? Poor wretched creature, the Lord have mercy on thee.--Ed.

¹⁶³ Rom. 12:15.

¹⁶⁴ Gal. 6:2.

¹⁶⁵ I Pet. 5:5.

¹⁶⁶ Ps. 138:6.

¹⁶⁷ Luke 18:13.

¹⁶⁸ Isa. 45:14.

¹⁶⁹ Isa. 53:5.

¹⁷⁰ Prov. 16:18.

*Christ bids us learn of him, humble to be,
Profession's beauty is humility.*¹⁷¹

3. Forgive, is here another statute law;¹⁷²
To be revenged is not worth a straw,
He that forgives shall also be forgiven,
Who doth not so, *must lose his part in
heaven;*¹⁷³
*Nor must thou weary of this duty be
'Cause God's not weary of forgiving thee.*¹⁷⁴
Thou livest by forgiveness;¹⁷⁵ should a stop
Be put thereto *one moment*, thou wouldst drop
Into the mouth of hell. Then let this move
Thee thy dear brother to forgive in love.¹⁷⁶
And we are bid in our forgivenesses
To do as God doth in forgiving his.¹⁷⁷
If any have a quarrel against any,
(As quarrels we have oft against a many)
Why then, as God, for Christ's sake, pardons
you,
For Christ's sake, pardon thou thy brother
too.¹⁷⁸
We say, What freely comes, doth freely go;
Then let all our forgivenesses be so.
I'm sure God heartily forgiveth thee,¹⁷⁹
My loving brother, prithee forgive me;
*But then in thy forgiveness be upright;
Do't with thine heart, or thou'rt an hypocrite.*¹⁸⁰
4. As we forgive, so we must watch and pray;¹⁸¹
For enemies we have, that night and day,
Should we not watch, would soon our graces
spoil,
Should we not pray, would our poor souls
defile.

¹⁷¹ Mat. 11:29.

¹⁷² Eph. 4:32.

¹⁷³ Matt. 18:34, 35; 6:15.

¹⁷⁴ Matt. 18:22.

¹⁷⁵ Eph. 4:32.

¹⁷⁶ Matt. 18:34, 35; 6:15; 18:22.

¹⁷⁷ Matt. 18:32, 33.

¹⁷⁸ II Cor. 2:10.

¹⁷⁹ Jer. 32:41.

¹⁸⁰ Matt. 18:35.

¹⁸¹ Matt. 26:41.

Without a watch, resist a foe who can?
 Who prays not, is not like to play the man?¹⁸²
 Complaint that he is overcome, he may;
 But who would win the field, must watch and
 pray.
 Who watches, should know who and who's
 together:
 Know we not friends from foes, how know we
 whether
 Of them to fight, or which to entertain?¹⁸³
Some have instead of foes,¹⁸⁴ familiars slain.
 Sometimes a lust will get into the place,
 Or work, or office, of some worthy grace;
 Till it has brought our souls to great decay.¹⁸⁵
 Unless we diligently watch and pray,
 Our pride will our humility precede:
 By th' nose, our unbelief our faith will lead.¹⁸⁶
 Self-love will be where self-denial should;
 And passion heat, what patience sometime
 cool'd.
And thus it will be with us night and day,¹⁸⁷
Unless we diligently watch and pray.¹⁸⁸

Besides what these domestics do, there are
 Abroad such foes as wait us to ensnare;
 Yea, they against us stand in battle-'ray,
 And will us spoil, unless we *watch and pray*.
 There is the world with all its vanities,¹⁸⁹
 There is the devil with a thousand lies;¹⁹⁰
 There are false brethren with their fair
 collusions,¹⁹¹
 Also false doctrines with their strong delusions;
 These will us take, yea carry us away
 From what is good, unless we *watch and pray*.
 Long life to many, is a fearful snare;
 Of sudden death we also need beware;

¹⁸² I Cor. 16:13.

¹⁸³ Eph. 6:13-18.

¹⁸⁴ I Pet. 5:8-9.

¹⁸⁵ Heb. 12:15.

¹⁸⁶ Luke 21:34, 35; Heb. 3:12, 13.

¹⁸⁷ Acts 20:30, 31.

¹⁸⁸ I Thess. 5:6; II Tim. 4:5; I Pet. 4:7.

¹⁸⁹ Luke 8:14.

¹⁹⁰ I Pet. 5:8.

¹⁹¹ Acts 20:30, 31.

The smiles and frowns of men, temptations be;
 And there's a bait in all we hear and see.
Let them who can, to any shew a way,
How they should live, that cannot watch and
pray.

Nor is't enough to keep all well within,
 Nor yet to keep all out that would be sin,
 If entertained; I must myself concern
 With my dear brother, as I do discern
 Him tempted, or a wand'ring from the way;¹⁹²
 Else as I should, I do not watch and pray.
 Pray then, and watch, be thou no drowsy
 sleeper,
 Grudge, nor refuse, to be thy brother's
 keeper,¹⁹³
 Seest thou thy brother's graces at an ebb?
 Is his heel taken in the spider's web?
 Pray for thy brother;¹⁹⁴ if that will not do,
 To him, and warn him of the present woe
 That is upon him; if he shall thee hear
 Thou wilt a saviour unto him appear.^{195 196}

5. Sincerity, to that we are enjoined,
 For I do in our blessed law-book find,¹⁹⁷
 That duties, how well done soe'er they seem,
 With our great God, are but of small esteem
 If not sincerely done; then have a care
 For hypocrites are hateful everywhere.¹⁹⁸
 Things we may do, yea, and may let men see
 Us do them too, design but honestly;
 Vain-gloriously let us not seek for praise,
 Vain-glory's nothing worth in gospel days.¹⁹⁹
 Sincerity seeks not an open place,
 To do, tho' it does all with open face;

¹⁹² Heb. 12:15.

¹⁹³ Gen. 4:9.

¹⁹⁴ I Thess. 5:14.

¹⁹⁵ Jas. 5:20; Matt. 18:15.

¹⁹⁶ Happy is that Christian, who, in obedience to his Lord's command, is so humble as to *seek* out the brother who has offended him; 'Go and tell him his fault *between thee and him alone,*' is the divine command. Is it not at the peril of our souls wilfully to violate this self-humiliating but imperative law?--Ed.

¹⁹⁷ Josh. 24:14.

¹⁹⁸ Matt. 23.

¹⁹⁹ II Cor. 1:12.

It loves no guises, nor disfigurations.
 'Tis plain, 'tis simple, hates equivocations.²⁰⁰
 Sincerity's that grace by which we poise,
 And keep our duties even: nor but toys
 Are all we do, if no sincerity²⁰¹
 Attend our works, lift it up ne'er so high.
 Sincerity makes heav'n upon us smile,
 Lo, here's a man in whom there is no guile!
 Nathaniel, an Israelite indeed!²⁰²
 With duties he sincerely doth proceed;
 Under the fig-tree heav'n saw him at prayer,
 There is but few do their devotions there.
 Sincerity! Grace is thereto entailed,²⁰³
 The man that was sincere, God never fail'd.
*One tear that falleth from sincerity,
 Is worth ten thousand from hypocrisy.*

6. Meekness is also here imposed by law,
 A froward spirit is not worth a straw.²⁰⁴
 A froward spirit is a bane to rest,
 They find it so, who lodge it in their breast.²⁰⁵
 A froward spirit suits with self-denial,
 With taking up the cross, and ev'ry trial,
 As cats and dogs, together by the ears;
 As scornful men do suit with frumps²⁰⁶ and
 jeers.²⁰⁷
 Meek as a lamb, mute as a fish, is brave,
 When anger boils, and passions vent do crave.
 The meek, God will in paths of judgment
 guide;²⁰⁸
 Good shall the meek eat, and be satisfied;²⁰⁹
 The Lord will lift the meek to highest station;²¹⁰
 Will beautify the meek with his salvation.²¹¹

²⁰⁰ II Cor. 2:17.

²⁰¹ II Cor. 8:8; I Pet. 2:1, 2; Phil. 1:10.

²⁰² John 1:47-49.

²⁰³ Eph. 6:24.

²⁰⁴ Job 5:13.

²⁰⁵ Prov. 2:12; 16:28; 17:20.

²⁰⁶ To 'frump,' to mock or browbeat.--Ed.

²⁰⁷ Prov. 22:5.

²⁰⁸ Col. 3:12; Ps. 25:9; Eph. 4:2.

²⁰⁹ Ps. 22:26.

²¹⁰ I Tim. 6:11; Ps. 147:6.

²¹¹ Ps. 149:4.

The meek are blest, the earth they shall
 inherit.²¹²

The meek is better than the proud in spirit.²¹³
 Meekness will make you quiet, hardy, strong,
 To bear a burden, and to put up wrong.
 Meekness, though divers troubles you are in,
 Will bridle passion, be a curb to sin.
 Thus God sets forth the meek before our eyes;
 A meek and quiet spirit God doth prize.²¹⁴

7. Temp'rance also, is on this house imposed,²¹⁵
 And whoso has it not, is greatly nosed²¹⁶
 By standers by, for greedy, lustful men:
 Nor can all we can say, excuse us, when
 Intemp'rance any where to them shall be
 Apparent; though we other vices flee.²¹⁷
 Temperance, the mother is of moderation,
 The beauty also of our conversation.²¹⁸
 Temperance will our affections moderate,
 And keep us from being inordinate
 In our embraces, or in our salutes
 Of what we have, also in our pursuits
 Of more, and in a sedate settlement
 Of mind, will make's in all states be content.²¹⁹
 Nor want we here an argument to prove
 That who, inordinate is, in his love
 Of worldly things, doth better things defy,
 And slight salvation for the butterfly.²²⁰

What argument can any man produce,
 Why we should be intemperate in the use
 Of any worldly good? Do we not see
 That all these things from us a fleeting be?²²¹
 What can we hold? What can we keep from
 flying
 From us? Is not each thing we have a dying?²²²

²¹² Ps. 37:11.

²¹³ Isa. 29:19; Tit. 3:2.

²¹⁴ I Pet. 3:4.

²¹⁵ II Pet. 1:6.

²¹⁶ 'Greatly nosed,' taken by the nose, ridiculed.--Ed.

²¹⁷ Phil. 3:18, 19.

²¹⁸ I Cor. 9:25.

²¹⁹ Phil. 4:11-13.

²²⁰ Prov. 23:5.

²²¹ Isa. 28:1, 4.

²²² Jas. 1:11.

My house, my wife, my child, they all grow old,
Nor am I e'er the younger for my gold;
*Here's none abiding, all things fade away,*²²³
*Poor I at best am but a clod of clay.*²²⁴

If that be true, man doth not live by bread,
He that has nothing else, must needs be dead;²²⁵
Take bread for what can in this world be
found,

Yet all that therein is, is but a sound,
An empty sound, there is no life at all,
It cannot save a sparrow from her fall.
Let us then use this world as we are bid,
And as in olden times, the godly did.
Who buy, should be as if they did possess
None of their purchase, or themselves did bless
In what they have; and he that doth rejoice
In what he hath, should rather out of choice,
Withdraw his mind from what he hath below,
And set his heart on whither he must go.²²⁶

For those that weep under their heavy crosses,
Or that are broken with the sense of losses,
Let them remember, all things here are fading,
And as to nature, of a self-degrading
And wasting temper; yea, both we and they
Shall waste, and waste, until we waste away.²²⁷

Let temperance then, with moderation be
As bounds to our affections, when we see,
Or feel, or taste, or any ways enjoy
Things pleasing to the flesh, lest we destroy
Ourselves therewith, or bring ourselves thereby
To surfeits, guilt, or Satan's slavery.²²⁸

8. Patience, another duty, as we find
In holy writ, is on this house enjoined;²²⁹
Her state, while here, is such, that she must
have

This grace abounding in her, or a slave
She'll quickly be unto their lusts and will,
That seek the mind of Satan to fulfil.

²²³ I John 2:17.

²²⁴ Gen. 18:27.

²²⁵ Deut. 8:3.

²²⁶ I Cor. 7:29-31; Col. 3:1, 2.

²²⁷ Gen. 3:19.

²²⁸ Luke 21:34.

²²⁹ Jas. 5:7-8.

He who must bear all wrongs without
resistance,
And that with gladness too, must have
assistance

Continually from patience, thereunto,
Or he will find such work too hard to do.²³⁰
Who meets with taunts, with mocks, with flouts
and squibs,

With raileries, reproaches, checks, and snibs;²³¹
Yea, he who for well-doing is abused,
Robb'd, spoiled, and goal'd, and ev'ry way
misused;

Has he not patience soon will be offended,
Yea his profession too will soon be ended.²³²

A Christian for religion must not fight,
But put up wrongs, though he be in the right;²³³
He must be merciful, loving, and meek,²³⁴
When they smite one, must turn the other
cheek.²³⁵

He must not render railing for reviling
Nor murmur when he sees himself a spoiling,²³⁶
When they shall curse, he must be sure to bless,
And thus with patience must his soul possess.
I doubt our frampered²³⁷ Christians will not
down

With what I say, yet I dare pawn my gown,
Do but compare my notes with sacred story,
And you will find patience the way to glory.²³⁸
Patience under the cross, a duty is,²³⁹
Whoso possess it, belongs to bliss;²⁴⁰
If it is present work accomplisheth;
If it holds out, and still abideth with
The Truth; then may we look for that reward,²⁴¹
Promised at the coming of the Lord.

²³⁰ Rom. 12:12.

²³¹ Heb. 6:15.

²³² Rev. 13:10; 14:12; Matt. 13:21.

²³³ II Cor. 6:4-8.

²³⁴ I Cor. 4:12, 13.

²³⁵ Matt. 5:38-41.

²³⁶ I Pet. 3:8-9; John 18:10-11

²³⁷ 'Frampered' or frampold, peevish, crossgrained,
rugged; now obsolete.--Ed.

²³⁸ Heb. 6:15.

²³⁹ Luke 21:19.

²⁴⁰ Jas. 1:3, 4.

²⁴¹ Jas. 5:7-9.

9. To entertain good men let's not forget
 Some by so doing have had benefit;
 Yea for to recompense this act of theirs,
*Angels have lodged with them unawares.*²⁴²
 Yea to encourage such a work as this,
 The Lord himself makes it a note of his,
 When hungry or when thirsty I have been,
 Or when a stranger, you did take me in.²⁴³
 Strangers should not to strangers but be kind
 Specially if conferring notes, they find
 Themselves, though strangers here, one
 brotherhood,
 And heirs, joint heirs, of everlasting good;
 These should as mother's sons, when they do
 meet
 In a strange country, one another greet
 With welcome; come in, brother, how dost do?
 Whither art wand'ring? Prithee let me know
 Thy state? Dost want or meat, or drink, or
 cloth?
 Art weary? Let me wash thy feet, I'm loth
 Thou shouldst depart, abide with me all night;
 Pursue thy journey with the morning light.²⁴⁴

X.

THE WAY OF REDUCING WHAT'S AMISS,
INTO ORDER HERE.

Although this house thus honourable is,
 Yet 'tis not sinless, many things amiss
 Do happen here, wherefore them to redress,
 We must keep to our rules of righteousness;
 Nor must we think it strange, if sin shall be
 Where virtue is; don't all men plainly see
 That in the holy temple there was dust,²⁴⁵
 That to our very gold, there cleaveth rust?
 In Abraham's family was a derider²⁴⁶
 I' th' palace of a king will be the spider.²⁴⁷
 Who saith, we have no sin, doth also say
 We have no need at all to watch and pray;

²⁴² Heb. 13:1, 2.²⁴³ Matt. 25:35-40.²⁴⁴ Judg. 19:16-21.²⁴⁵ II Chron. 29:16, 17.²⁴⁶ Gen. 21:9.²⁴⁷ Prov. 30:28.

To live by faith, the flesh to mortify,
 Or of more of the spirit to sanctify
 Our nature. All this wholly needless is
 With him, who as to this, has nought amiss.
 But we confess, 'cause we would not be liars,²⁴⁸
 That we still feel the motions and desires
 Of sin within us, and should fall away,²⁴⁹
 Did not Christ intercede and for us pray.²⁵⁰
 We therefore do conclude that sin is here,
 But that it may not to our shame appear,
 We have our rules, thereby with it to deal,
 And plaisters too, our deadly wounds to heal.
 And seeing idleness gives great occasions
 To th' flesh, to make its rude and bold
 invasions
 Upon good orders, 'tis ordained we see,
 That none dwell here, but such as workers be:
 So plain's the law for this, and so complete,
 It bids who will not work, forbear to eat;²⁵¹
 Let then each one be diligent to do
 What grace or nature doth oblige them to.
 Who have no need to work for meat or clothes,
 Should work for those that want. Not that the
 sloth
 Of idleness should be encouraged,
 But that those, poor indeed, be clad and fed.
 Dorcas did thus, and 'tis to sacred story²⁵²
 Committed for her praise and lasting glory.

This house then is no nurse to idleness;
 Fig-trees are here to keep,²⁵³ and vines to dress;
 Here's work for all; yea, work that must be
 done;²⁵⁴
 Yet work, like that, to playing in the sun;
 The toil's a pleasure, and the labour sweet,²⁵⁵
 Like that of David's dancing in the street;²⁵⁶
 The work is short, the wages are for ever,
 The work like me, the wages like the giver

²⁴⁸ I John 1:8, 10.²⁴⁹ Luke 21:34-36.²⁵⁰ Heb. 7:25.²⁵¹ II Thess. 3:10.²⁵² Acts 9:36-39.²⁵³ Prov. 27:18.²⁵⁴ Mark 13:34.²⁵⁵ I John 5:3.²⁵⁶ II Sam. 6:14.

No drone must hide himself under those eaves;
 Who sows not, will in harvest reap no sheaves.
 The slothful man himself, may plainly see,
 That honey's gotten by the working bee.
 But here's no work for life, that's freely given;
 Meat, drink, and cloths, and life, we have from
 heav'n;

Work's here enjoined, 'cause it is a pleasure,
 Vice to suppress, and augment heavenly
 treasure

Moreover, 'tis to shew, if men profess
 The faith, and yet abide in idleness,
 Their faith is vain,²⁵⁷ no man can ever prove
 He's right, but by the faith that works by
 love.²⁵⁸

If this good counsel is by thee rejected;
 If work and labour is by thee neglected;
 If thou, like David, lollest on thy bed;²⁵⁹
 Or art like to a horse, pamper'd and fed
 With what will fire thy lusts,²⁶⁰ and so lay
 snares

For thine own soul, when thou shalt be i' th'
 wars:

Then take what follows, *sin must be detected,
 And thou without repentance quite rejected.*²⁶¹

This is the house of God,²⁶² his dwelling-place,
 'Tis here that we behold his lovely face;
 But if it should polluted be with sin,
 And so abide, he quickly will begin
 To leave it desolate, and then woe to it,
*Sin and his absence quickly will undo it.*²⁶³

And since sin is, of things the worst of all,
 And watcheth like a serpent on a wall,
 Or flyeth like an eagle in the air,
 Or runs as desperate ships, void of all care,
 Or, (as great Solomon hath wisely said)
 Is as the way of wantons with a maid,
 Who tick, and toy, and with a tempting giggle
 Provoke to lust, and by degrees, so wriggle

²⁵⁷ Jas. 2:20.

²⁵⁸ Gal. 5:6.

²⁵⁹ II Sam. 11:1-5.

²⁶⁰ Jer. 5:8; 13:27.

²⁶¹ Luke 13:1-3.

²⁶² I Cor. 3:16, 17.

²⁶³ Jer. 7:11-15.

Them into their affections, that they go
 The way to death, so do themselves undo:
 As it is said, this mischief to prevent,
 Let all men watch, yea, and be diligent
 Observers of its motions, and then fly,
 This is the way to live, and not to die.

☞ He that would never fall, must never slip,
 Who would obey the call, must fear the whip.

God would also that every stander by
 That in the grass doth see the adder lie,
 Should cry as he did, death is in the pot,
 That many by its poison perish not.

But if that beastly thing shall hold its hold,
 And make the man possessed basely bold
 In pleading for it, or shall it deny,
 Or it shall seek to cover with a lie;
 Then take more aid, and make a fresh assault
 At it again, diminish not the fault,
 But charge it home. If yet he will not fear,
 But still unto his wickedness adhere,
 Then tell the house thereof. But if he still
 Persist in his abomination will,

Then fly him, 'cause he is a leprous man,
 Count him with heathens and the publican.²⁶⁴

But if he falls before thee at the first,
 Then be thou to him faithful, loving, just.
*Forgive his sin, tell it not to a brother,*²⁶⁵
*Lest thou thyself be served so by another.*²⁶⁶

If he falls not, but in the second charge,
 Spread not his wickedness abroad at large.²⁶⁷
 But, if thou think his sorrow to be sound,
 Forgive his sin, and hide it under ground.²⁶⁸

If he shall stand the first and second shot;
 If he before the church, repenteth not,
 Deal with him as the matter shall require,
 Let not the house for him be set on fire.
 If after all, he shall repent and turn
 To God, and you, you must not let him burn
 For ever under sense of sin and shame,
*You must his sin forgive in Christ his name.*²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴ Matt. 18:15-17.

²⁶⁵ Prov. 25:9.

²⁶⁶ Mark 4:24.

²⁶⁷ Jas. 5:20.

²⁶⁸ I Pet. 4:8.

²⁶⁹ II Cor. 2:6.

Confirm your love to him in Christ, you must,
By all such ways as honest are, and just.
Shy be not of him, carry't not aloof,
But rather give him of your love such proof,
That he may gather thence, ye do believe
To mercy Christ again doth him receive.²⁷⁰

Two things, monish you, as to this, I would;
The first, to shew the church wherein she
should

In all her actions so herself behave,
As to convince the fault, she would save
His soul; and that 'tis for this very thing,
She doth him unto open judgment bring.
Then would I shew the person they reject,
What will, without repentance, be th' effect
Of this tremendous censure, so conclude;
Leaving my judgment to the multitude
Of those who sober and judicious be,
Begging of each of them a prayer for me.

1. This house, in order to this work, must be
Affected with the sin and misery,²⁷¹
Of this poor creature, yea, must mourn and
weep,
To think such tares, in your neglect, or sleep,
Should spring up here, nor must they once
invent
To think, till he's cast out, you're innocent.²⁷²

2. Thus leaven, the whole lump has leavened;
Israel was guilty of what Achan did;
And so must stand, until they purged are,
Till Achan doth, for sin, his burden bear.²⁷³
The reason is, Achan a member was
Of that great body, and by nature's laws,
The hand, foot, eye, tongue, ear, or one of
these,
May taint the whole with Achan's foul disease.
The church must too be sensible of this,
Some lep'rous stones make all the house amiss:
And as the stones must thence removed be,
In order to the house's sanctity,
So it must purged be (in any wise)
Before 'tis counted clean (by sacrifice).²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ II Cor. 2:8-10.

²⁷¹ I Cor. 5:2.

²⁷² I Cor. 5:6-7.

²⁷³ Josh. 7:10-13; 22:20.

3. Next have a care, lest sin, which you
should purge,
Becomes not unto you a farther scourge,
The which it will, if such shall judges be,
Which from its spots and freckles are not free;
Pluck thou the beam first out of thine own eye,
Else the condemned will thee vilify²⁷⁵
And say, let not the pot the kettle judge;²⁷⁶
If otherwise, it will beget a grudge,
A great one 'twixt the church and him that
sinned,
Nor by such means, can ever such be wonned
To a renew'd embrace of holiness;
More like be tempted further to transgress.

4. Again, let those that loud against it cry,
See they don't entertain it inwardly;
Sin, like to pitch, will to the fingers cleave,
Look to it then, let none himself deceive;²⁷⁷
'Tis catching; make resistances afresh,
Abhor the garment spotted by the flesh.²⁷⁸
*☞ Some at the dimness of the candle puff,
Who yet can daub their fingers with the smuff.*

5. Beware, likewise, lest rancour should
appear
Against the person, do in all things fear:
Bewail the man, while you abhor his sin;
Pity his soul;²⁷⁹ the flesh you still are in;
Thyself consider thou may'st tempted be,²⁸⁰
Hast thou no pity, who will pity thee?²⁸¹

6. See that the ground be good on which you
go:
Sin, but not virtue show dislike unto.
Take heed of hypocritical intentions,
And quarrel not at various apprehensions
About some smaller matter, lest it breed
Needless debates, and lest that filthy seed

²⁷⁴ Lev. 14:33-57.

²⁷⁵ Matt. 7:3, 4.

²⁷⁶ John 8:7.

²⁷⁷ Josh. 22:17.

²⁷⁸ Jude 23.

²⁷⁹ Jude 20, 23.

²⁸⁰ Gal. 6:1.

²⁸¹ Jas. 2:13.

Contention,²⁸² should o'errun your holy
ground,²⁸³
*And lest not love, but nettles there are found.*²⁸⁴

7. You must likewise allow each man his
grains,
For that none perfect are, sin yet remains,
And human frailties do attend the best;
To bear and forbear here, will tend to rest.
Vain jangling, jars, and strifes will there
abound,
Where moles are mountains made, or fault is
found,
With every little, trivial, petty thing;²⁸⁵
This spirit snib, or 'twill much mischief bring²⁸⁶
Into this house, and 'tis for want of love,²⁸⁷
'Tis entertain'd: *it is not of the dove.*²⁸⁸

8. For those that have private opinions too
We must make room, or shall the church
undo:²⁸⁹
Provided they be such as don't impair
Faith, holiness, nor with good conscience jar:²⁹⁰
Provided also those that hold them shall
Such faith hold to themselves,²⁹¹ and not let fall
Their fruitless notions in their brother's way,²⁹²
Do this, and faith and love will not decay.

9. We must also in these our dealings shew
We put a difference 'twixt those sins that do
Clash with the light of nature, and what we
Perceive against the faith of Christ to be.
Those against nature, nature will detect;²⁹³
Those against faith, faith from them must direct
The judgment, conscience, understanding too,
Or there will be no cure, whate'er you do.

²⁸² I Cor. 1:11

²⁸³ Tit. 3:9; I Cor. 11:16.

²⁸⁴ I Tim. 6:3, 6.

²⁸⁵ I Tim. 1:6, 20.

²⁸⁶ II Tim. 2:16.

²⁸⁷ Tit. 1:10.

²⁸⁸ Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:13.

²⁸⁹ Rom. 14:13.

²⁹⁰ Rom. 14:16.

²⁹¹ Rom. 14:22.

²⁹² I Cor. 8:9-13.

²⁹³ Exod. 32:22-24; II Sam. 12:7-13.

When men are caught in immoralities,
Nature will start, the conscience will arise
To judgment;²⁹⁴ and if impudence doth recoil,
Yet guilt, and self-condemnings will embroil
The wretch concerned,²⁹⁵ in such unquietness
Or shame, as will induce him to confess
His fault, and pardon crave of God and man,
Such men with ease therefore we conquer can.

But 'tis not thus with such as swerve in faith
With them, who, as our wise Apostle saith,
Entangled are at unawares, with those
Cunning to trap, to snare, and to impose
By falsifyings, their prevarications:²⁹⁶
No, these are slyly taken from their stations,
Unknown to nature; yea, in judgment they
Think they have well done to forsake the way.
Their understanding, and their judgment too
Doth like, or well approve of what they do.
These are, poor souls, beyond their art and
skill,
Ta'en captive by the devil, at his will,²⁹⁷
Here therefore you must patience exercise,
And suffer long, ye must not tyrannize
It over such, but must all meekness shew;
Still dropping of good doctrine as the dew,²⁹⁸
Against their error; so its churlishness
You conquer will, and may their fault redress.²⁹⁹

The reason why we must not exercise
That roughness here, as where conviction lies
In nature, is because those thus ensnared
Want nature's light and help to be repair'd.
A spirit hath them taken, they are gone,
Delusions supernat'ral they're on
The wing of; They are out o' th' reach of man³⁰⁰
Nothing but God, and gospel reach them can.
Now since we cannot give these people eyes,
Nor regulate their judgment, wherein lies,
Our work with them, if not, as has been said,
In exercising patience. While display'd

²⁹⁴ John 8:9.

²⁹⁵ Acts 5:1-5.

²⁹⁶ Eph. 4:14.

²⁹⁷ II Tim. 2:23-26.

²⁹⁸ II Tim. 4:2.

²⁹⁹ Tit. 1:13.

³⁰⁰ I Tim. 1:19-20.

The holy word before their faces is,
By which alone they must see what's amiss
With their poor souls, and so convert again,
To him with whom salvation doth remain.

Obj. But they are turbulent, they would
confound
The truth, and all in their perdition drown'd.

Ans. If turbulent and mischievous they are,
Imposing their opinions without care
Who they offend, or do destroy thereby.³⁰¹
Then must the church deal with them presently,
Lest tainted be the whole with their delusion,
And brought into disorder and confusion.

XI.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THOSE
THUS DEALT WITH.

The man that worthily rejected is,
And cast out of this house, his part in bliss
Is lost for ever, turns he not again,
True faith and holiness to entertain.
Nor is it boot, for who are thus cast out,
Themselves to flatter, or to go about
To shift the censure; nothing here will do,
Except a new conversion thou come to.
He that is bound on earth, is bound in heaven,
Nor is his loosing, but the sin forgiven;
Repentance too, forgiveness must precede,
Or thou must still abide among the dead.³⁰²

XII.

AN EXPOSTULATION WITH SUCH TO
RETURN.

☞ O Shame! Is't not a shame for men to be
For sin, spu'd out from good society!
For man enlightened to be so base!
To turn his back upon the God of grace!
For one who for his sins has mourn'd and cry'd,
To slight him, who for sin hath bled and died!
What fool would sell his part in paradise,
That has a soul, and that of such a price?
What parallel can suit with such so well,
As those, for sin cast down from heaven to hell!

³⁰¹ II Tim. 2:16-18.

³⁰² Matt. 18:15-20, 28-35.

But let me tell thee, here is aggravation;
The angels, though they did fall from their
station

Had not the caution thou hast had; they fell;³⁰³
This thou hast seen, and seeing, didst rebel.
One would a thought, the noise of this their
fall,

A warning; yea, a warning, and a call,
Should unto thee have been, to have a care
Of falling too:³⁰⁴ O how then didst thou dare,
Since God did not spare them, thus to presume
To tempt him in his wrath, thee to consume.
Nor did the angels from a Jesus fall,
Redeemed they were not, from a state of thrall;
But thou! as one redeem'd, and that by blood,
Redemption hast despised; and the mud
Or mire of thine own filth again embracest:
A dying bleeding Jesus thou disgracest!
What wilt thou do? see's not how thou hast
trod

Under thy foot, the very Son of God?³⁰⁵
O fearful hand of God! And fearful will
Thy doom be, when his wrath thy soul shall
kill.³⁰⁶

☞ Yea, with a signal these must hear their sin,
This dirty sow from mire has washed been,
Yet there did wallow, after wash'd she was;
So to procure a lust, obtain'd this loss.
O shame! is't not a shame for man to be,
So much averse to his felicity,
That none can make him leave to play the fool,
*Till to the devil he be put to school,*³⁰⁷
To learn his own salvation to prize?
O fool! must now the devil make thee wise?
O sot! that will in wickedness remain,
Unless the devil drives thee back again.³⁰⁸

³⁰³ II Pet. 2:4.

³⁰⁴ Jude 6.

³⁰⁵ Heb. 10:29-31.

³⁰⁶ II Pet. 2:20-22.

³⁰⁷ Matt. 18:34.

³⁰⁸ I Tim. 1:20.

Hast quite forgot how thou wast wont to
pray,
And cry out for forgiveness night and day?
Or dost thou count they were but painted fears
Which from thine eyes did squeeze so many
tears?

Remember man, thy prayers and tears will cry
Thee down to hell, for thine apostacy.
Who will not have what he has prayed for,
Must die the death, his prayer shall him abhor.
Hast thou forgotten that most solemn vow
Thou mad'st to God, when thou didst crave he
bow

His ear unto thee would, and give thee grace,
And would thee also in his arms embrace?
That vow, I say, whereby thou then didst bind
Thyself to him, that now thy roving mind
Recoil against him should, and fling away
From him, and his commandments disobey.³⁰⁹
What has he done? wherein has he offended?
Thou actest now, as if thou wast intended
To prove him guilty of unrighteousness,
Of breach of promise, or that from distress
He could, or would not save thee, or that thou
Hast found a better good than he; but how
Thou wilt come off, or how thou wilt excuse
Thyself, 'cause thou art gone, and did refuse
To wait upon him that consider well;
Thou art as yet alive, on this side hell.
Is't not a shame, a stinking shame to be
Cast forth God's vineyard as a barren tree?³¹⁰
To be thrown o'er the pales, and there to lie,
Or be pick'd up by th' next that passeth by?

Well, thou hast turn'd away, return again;
Bethink thyself, thy foot from sin refrain;
Hark! thou art call'd upon, stop not thine ear:
Return, backsliding children, come, draw near
Unto your God;³¹¹ repent, and he will heal
Your base backslidings, to you will reveal
That grace and peace which with him doth
remain,
For them that turn away, and turn again.³¹²

³⁰⁹ Job 15:6.

³¹⁰ Luke 13:7.

³¹¹ Jer. 3:12-14, 22.

³¹² Hos. 14:1-4.

Take with thee words, come to the throne of
grace

There supplicate thy God, and seek his face;
Like to the prodigal, confess thy sin,
Tell him where, and how vicious thou hast
been.

☞ Suppose he shall against thee shut the
door,

Knock thou the louder, and cry out the more;
What if he makes thee there to stand a while?
Or makes as if he would not reconcile
To thee again? Yet take thee no denial,
Count all such carriages but as a trial
Whether thou art in earnest in thy suit,
As one truly forlorn and destitute;
But hide thou nought of all that thou hast done,
Open thy bosom, make confession
Of all thy wickedness, tell every whit;³¹³
Hast thou a secret sin? don't cover it;³¹⁴
Confess, thyself judge, if thou wouldst not die;
*Who doth himself judge, God doth justify.*³¹⁵

To sin, and stand in't, is the highest evil;
This makes a man most like unto the devil;
This bids defiance unto God and grace;
This man resists him spitteth in his face,
Scorns at his justice, mocketh at his power,
Tempts him, provokes him, grieves him every
hour:

When he ariseth, he will recompense
This sturdy rebel for his impenitence:
Be not incorrigible then, come back again,
There's hope, beg mercy while life doth remain.

Obj. But I fear I am lost and cast away,
Sentence is past, and who reverse it may?

Ans. The sentence past, admitteth or reprieve;
Yea, of a pardon, canst thou but believe.³¹⁶

TURN AGAIN SINNER, NEVER MAKE A
DOUBT,
COME, THE LORD JESUS WILL NOT CAST
THEE OUT.

³¹³ Jer. 3:13, 23-25.

³¹⁴ Ps. 32:5.

³¹⁵ I Cor. 11:31, 32.

³¹⁶ John 6:37.