

# COLLECTIONS

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FOR THE YEAR

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## INTRODUCTION.

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*THE first place in this volume is given to JAMES DUANE'S Statement of the Evidence and Argument in defence of the territorial rights and jurisdiction of New York, which had been drawn into controversy, not only in the affair of the New Hampshire Grants, but in the unsettled questions of boundary with Massachusetts, east of the Hudson, and her claim to lands west of the Delaware.*

*In 1784 a federal court was instituted, pursuant to the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, to hear and determine the controversy between the States of Massachusetts and New York. Mr. DUANE'S brief (now printed from the original MS. in the possession of the Society) was prepared for the expected trial; which, however, never took place. The history of the proceedings may be found in the Journals of Congress, from which it appears that after many difficulties the controversy was amicably settled and determined by an agreement entered into on the 16th December, 1786, between the agents of the States who were parties.*

*Although this document was not used in the previous hearing before Congress of the Vermont Controversy, it contains the essence of the New York claims in that affair, which was yet unsettled when it was prepared. In all these transactions Mr. DUANE was a principal agent and manager on the part of New York.*

*The collection respecting Old New York and Trinity Church has been drawn chiefly from the newspapers of the colonial period. It will be observed that in the general design Trinity Church furnishes a nucleus for the association of much valuable material for the illustration of the local and family history of New York.*

*The sermon of the Rev. Francis Makemie, which concludes the volume, is probably the earliest Presbyterian sermon in America now extant, and was certainly the first preached in the City of New York. The circumstances attending its delivery and the persecution of its author give peculiar historical interest to this memorial of the first appearance here of a religious denomination now so numerous and powerful.*

*The Narrative of the author's imprisonment, etc., is well known to historians. Printed first in Boston within a few months after the events occurred, it was reprinted in London in 1708. It was again reprinted in New York in 1755, with a prefatory dedication to the members of the General Assembly of the Province by "the author of the Watch-Tower"—William Livingston.*

*The Sermon itself has hitherto escaped the attention of historical writers, and is now reprinted from the original in the Force Collection. It is one of the rarest of American tracts. One cause of its rarity may be inferred from the following passage in the Epistle to the Reader prefixed to the Narrative of the author's imprisonment, etc.*

*"Tho' Preaching a Sermon, and Printing it as the cause of Imprisonment, be reputed a Libel, to justifie opening of Letters, and seizing Books, without restoration or satisfaction, I hope it will be no crime for Losers to speak, in telling the World, what we have suffered . . . for Preaching one Sermon, without obtaining a Licence," etc.*

NEW-YORK: January, 1871.

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III.

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REV. FRANCIS MAKEMIE'S SERMON.

**A Good Conversation.**

A

# SERMON

Preached at the City  
OF

**New-York,**

January 19<sup>th</sup> 1706, 7.

By **Francis Makemie,**  
Minister of the Gospel of CHRIST.

*Math. 5. 11. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my Names sake.*

*Acts 5. 29. Then Peter, and the other Apostles answered, and said, We ought to obey God, rather than men.*

*Preces et lachrymæ sunt arma Ecclesiæ.*

BOSTON in N. E.

Printed by B. Green, for Benj. Eliot.

Sold at his Shop. 1707.

Dedicated,  
To the Small Congregation,  
who heard the following

S E R M O N .

My Brethren,

**I** Appeal to you, as Witnesses, that this is the Sermon, for which I am now a Prisoner. And when you are informed, I designed it for Two Discourses, you need not be amazed at its bulk, beyond the New Mode of Preaching: Tho' you may remember I mentioned all these heads, now Published; to which I only add some enlargements. As I first delivered this practical and plain Sermon to few, so I am now committing it to Publick view of all; that both you and they may try it, at the bar of Scripture, Law and Reason, and impartially determine, whether it contains any thing favouring of Pernicious Doctrine, and Principles; any thing to the disturbance of the Church of England, or of the Government. If I had been thoroughly acquainted with New-York, and the irregularities thereof, which afterwards I was an Eye, and Ear Witness of, I could not have fixed on a more Suitable Doctrine; which must be purely attributed to the Divine Providence: This was not among the least of my inducements for putting this Sermon into the hands of those who heard it not. And that this Discourse may be blessed of God, to awaken Sinners to reflect on, and detect the irregularities of their past Lives, and furnish any with prevailing Considerations, to a more universal Conformity to the Rules of the Gospel, is and shall be the Sincere desire of him, who is a Well-Wisher to Immortal Souls.

**Francis Makemie.**

March 3d  
1706, 7.

# A Good Conversation.

PSALMS L. 23.

*To him that ordereth his Conversation  
aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

The Christian Religion has so full, so compleat, and perfect a Rule, or *Canon* for its guide and direction, that there is nothing deficient that is necessary for the Christians Counsel, and for advancing his accomplishment, in every State and Condition, in every Station, Capacity, or Relation, men may be placed in of God, in the World; whither for instructing blinded and dead Sinners, what *Glory* and Perfection they were originally Created in, and wilfully forfeited and lost, by *Adams* Apostasy; or for detecting the *Enormities* and *Irregularities*, both of Heart and Life, as a clear *Looking-Glass*, wherein we view both the inward and outward man. And not only points out to Sinners the true way of *Life and Salvation*, but most particularly instructs us, how to *Think*, how to *Speak*, and how to *Act*, both towards God, and towards one another. And this is the *Word of Life*, the Revelation of Heaven, the *Rule*, and *Test*, both of Faith, and Life; which was not originally at *Sundry times and in diverse manners*, communicated to the World in Vain; neither preserved, nor propogated through the several Periods, and many Generations of this corrupted World, by the powerful, and wonderful over-ruling Providence of Heaven, from the deepest Malice of Hell, and corrupt designs of men; but that it might be valued by us, and embraced, as an *Universal guide*, and Special Directory for regulating our Lives, and Conversations, and

thereby qualifying us for, and leading us to the Salvation of our Souls; which according to the language of the Spirit of God, by the Divine Psalmist, in my Text, gives an undoubted right, and title thereunto, arising not from *Merit*, but the gracious *Promise* of Heaven. *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

These Words are a part of a Psalm; wherein we have *three* principal parts, with a *Threatning*, which is severe, and a *Promise* great and free subjoined.

The *First part* of the Psalm, Intituled, *A Psalm of Asaph*, expresses in high, and lofty terms, the Great and Terrible Majesty of God in the Churches, to raise an awe, and create a suitable regard in the Minds of Sinners, to let men know who it is, they have to deal with; not frail and mortal Man; but the Everliving and Glorious Majesty of Heaven, and of Earth. *The Mighty God, the Lord hath spoken, from the rising of the Sun to the going down thereof*, verse 1. *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence, a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him*, Verse 3.

Secondly; He reproves, and discovers the *Formality*, *Hypocrisy*, and *Vanity* of the Ceremonial Typical and Jewish Services *Sacrifices*, and external Oblations, *without Holiness*, thanksgiving, and more internal and spiritual Adoration; by invocation, and paying our Vows unto the Lord; whereby God seems to give a prophetic hint of that *Change*, from the *External, Mosaical Oblations*, to the *Simplicity of the Gospel*, and more *Spiritual Worship*.

Thirdly; We have the Lord by the Prophet reprehending and that sharply the Wicked *Professors* of that Age, both for their Words and Actions; tho' they declared *Gods Statutes*, and took his *Covenant in their Mouth*, from the 16 Vers.

The Subsequent *Threatning* is awful and tremendous, with an awakening *Duty* prefixed, *Consider this ye that forget God*, lest I tear you in pieces, and there

be none to deliver. [Which Text I discoursed from at Woodbridge, in *East Jersey*.]

The *Promise* annexed as the improvement and Application in part, of the foregoing Doctrine, is my Text, *To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

In which Words, for division of my Text, all men may observe two parts in general. (1) We have a large comprehensive, rich, and enriching *Promise*, assured and manifested, *I will shew the Salvation of God.* (2) We have the *Person* particularly described, and specified, to whom this *Promise* is assured and made, and most particularly proposed *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

The next thing to be insisted on, is the Explication of these Words, thus divided; And the first part of my division, and last part of my Text, is the *Promise, I will shew the Salvation of God*: wherein three or four things are plain and obvious. 1. The manifestation, or rather the manner of manifestation *I will shew.* 2. The matter of the *Promise*, or thing *Promised*, and that is no less than *Salvation.* 3. A discriminating and distinguishing account of this *Salvation*, which magnifies the *Promise, It is the Salvation of God.* 4. We may add a fourth, which is the *Promiser*, [1] Which from the Connection with the foregoing Words, must be *God: He that offereth Praise glorifyeth me, and I will shew the Salvation of God.*

There is little in the Words call for any prolix Explication, the words being plain, I will only open the manner of manifestation, what it is to *shew*; and it is a word frequently used, and of various Significations in Scripture. 1. It signifies to *Discover*, Gen. 12. 1. *Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy fathers House, unto the Land that I will shew thee;*] or discover to thee: I will lead thee to a Land, thou sawest not, nor knew of before, I will shew it thee. 2. It

signifies sometimes to *Teach* and *Instruct*, Act. 20. 20. *And how I kept back nothing, that was profitable unto you, but have [shewed you] and taught you Publickly, and from house to house: where shewing, and teaching are all one: for nothing more common even in vulgar Speech, then when one wants to be taught, Will you shew me such a thing?* 3. To *shew*, signifies to *Compare*, or illustrate, Luk. 6. 47. *Whoso ever cometh unto me, and heareth my Sayings, and doeth them, I will [shew you] to whom he is like.* 4. To *shew* is to *direct*, Exod. 18. 20. *And thou shalt teach them Ordinances, and Laws, and shalt [shew] them the way wherein they must walk, and the work they must do.* So that it is pointing out, and directing them to the way wherein they must walk. 5. To *shew*, signifies to impart, give, or freely to bestow, as Psal. 4. 6. *There is many that say, who will [shew us] any good; lift up the light of thy Countenance upon us.* Joh. 5. 20. *For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doth, and he will [shew him] greater things than these, that ye may marvel.* So that in my Text several of these Senses and acceptations may justly fall in here; *I will shew you the Salvation of God*; that is, I will *Discover, and Manifest* this *Salvation*, which was hid, and concealed from Ages, and the past Generations; yea even the Wise and Prudent, and will *shew* it unto you: Yea, which is more, I will particularly and in a more special manner *Instruct* and *Direct* you, by my Word and Spirit, Effectually and Savingly, to this necessary, and great *Salvation*: But more than all this, is implied in the Promise, I will most freely, and fully, *give, impart, bestow* upon, and apply this *Salvation* unto you. Unspeakable Promise! Unparalleled Blessing! desired by most, obtained by few, and fully known by none, but such as are swallowed up in the Eternal Enjoyment thereof.

Secondly; You may observe the thing it self Promised, and that is the greatest blessing we want, and the highest favour we can be admitted unto, an ac-

cumulated blessing, and that is *Salvation*: This is also a word used in Scripture, of various Significations. 1. It sometimes signifies an *External*, and *Temporal Salvation*, or deliverance, from Temporal Evils, and External, or bodily troubles: As bold, and believing *Moses*, when hotly pursued by *Pharaoh*, his mighty *Egyptian* Host, he encouraged the Children of Israel, and said unto the People, Exod. 14. 13. *Fear ye not, stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you this day: for the Egyptians whom you have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* But this is not the only Salvation in our Text, which oft-times is common to the Godly and Ungodly; and such as walk irregularly, as well as those that *Order their Conversations aright*, may be visited with such outward deliverances from Enemies, and dangers, both by Sea & Land. 2. *Salvation* is oft in Scripture taken for *God* himself, the beginning, author and original cause of our *Salvation*, Psal. 27. 1. *The Lord is my Sight and my Salvation, whom shall I fear; the Lord is the strength of my Life, of whom shall I be afraid.* 3. It is used for our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the Procurer and meritorious cause of our *Salvation*, as is clear from the words of good old Simeon, Luk. 2. 30. *For mine eyes have seen thy Salvation;* which was the Babe *Jesus*, in his Arms: and he blessed God that he had seen him by whom *Salvation* was purchased for the World. 4. It is taken sometimes for the *Doctrine of Salvation*, by which it is revealed and manifested unto the World, by which it is offered, tendered and applied to Souls, Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us, by them that heard him.* But, 5. It is taken principally and chiefly, for a *Spiritual*, and *Soul deliverance* from *Spiritual Evils*; not excluding but including *God* the Author, and Finisher of our Faith, who is *Savingly* manifested to, and known by such as are *Saved*, and becomes their God; neither excluding, but including our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who by way of

eminency is the *Salvation* of Souls; neither excluding, but including the *Doctrine of Salvation*, by which we are enlightened, directed, and perswaded to accept of the *Great Salvation* contained therein, and offered thereby; but directly and most strictly *Salvation* is an *Actual Redemption*; and *Deliverance* from *Soul Evils*, *Spiritual Calamities*, and *Eternal Wrath and Vengeance*, due to our *Apostasy*, from the *Living God*, and all the consequent *Sins* thereof, as their just wages, and debt: And this *Salvation* which is principally, chiefly and directly intended and understood in my Text, must be considered, in a three-fold respect, in this Explication.

1. In its *Iniation*, beginning or original, its foundation being laid, in the *Soul*, by *Conviction*, *Regeneration*, or *Conversion*, hence is its first rise, as to us in the *Soul*. *Salvation* in this respect, is such as our Saviour speaks of to *Zacheus*, Luk. 19. 9. *And Jesus said unto him, This day is Salvation come into this House*. Now it is begun, for the Master and Head of the Family had given good Evidence to the truth of what our Lord asserted, and from our Saviours Words is observed by some, to drop a Promise of future Saving blessings to that *House* from so good a *Beginning*; for nothing more usual, then for the *Heal* of a Family, to endeavour to reduce the whole *House*, and all in it to the same Faith, and Christianity he had so lately embraced; of which, Scripture affords many Instances: As in *Cornelius* the Centurion, Act 10. 2. *He feared God with all his House*. 48. v. *He and his House were Baptized*. In *Lydia* likewise, Act. 16. 14. God no sooner opened her heart, but she attended and so believed. And 15. v. *She was baptized and all her House*. It was so likewise with the *Jaylor*, Act 16. 34. *Believing in God, with all his House*. And this *beginning* of *Salvation* in the Souls of Men and Women is illustrated to us by many Metaphorical expressions, As (1) *Quickning from the dead*, Eph. 2. 1. *You hath he Quickned; who were dead in sins and trespasses*, 5. v. *Even when we were dead in sins, hath*

*quicken'd us together with Christ.* (2) It is called a *Resurrection*, or *raising from the Dead*, Eph. 5. 14. *Arise from the Dead*, Joh. 5. 25. *The Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* (3) It is called an *Awakening out of sleep*, Eph. 5. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest.* (4) It is called a *New Creation*, and Converts are called *New Creatures*, Gal. 6. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a New Creature:* Eph. 2. 10. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* (5) It is called a *New-Birth*, or *Regeneration*, Joh. 3. 3. *Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* (6) It is called a *Conversion*, or turning unto God. *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall in no way enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* All which illustrate the reality, truth, and universality of our gracious change, as the beginning of our Salvation.

2. We must view our *Salvation* in the *Proficiency*, and *Progress* thereof, from its root, seed, and initiation, in the *Soul*, whereby it grows and advances by degrees, towards the *Full Stature of Men in Christ*; increasing from *Babes* to *Stronger* and *Riper* years in *Grace*. Of this State of Salvation, the Apostle *Paul* speaks, 2 Cor. 6. 2. *This is the accepted time, this is the day of Salvation.*

3. As it comprehends its beginning, and first work with its *Progress*, *Growth*, & *Increase*; so it necessarily implies its *Consummation*, *Complement*, and *Perfection*, without which, it can never properly be *Judged Salvation*. And this consists in two steps; One is at the dissolution of *Soul*, and *Body* by *Death*, when the *Souls* of the renewed, and righteous, in whom the *Seed* of *Saving light* and *grace* has been sown, which has appeared with some suitable fruit, and improvement in a day and season of *Grace*; shall lay aside their earthly vail, and clay *Tabernacle* for a time, and shall ascend into the *World of Spirits* above, into the *Kingdom* of our

heavenly Father, there to be glorified, or translated into his likeness, by beholding his Glory; and so shall be fit to dwell, and converse with the *Spirits of the Just made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. And shall be with Christ in unspeakable and inconceivable Glory, where *nothing shall enter that defileth*, Rev. 21. 27. And where no stain, nor spot of pollution shall cleave to any Soul; but a perfect rectitude, and conformity of Soul to the Image of God, shall shine in its full Meridian; Made possessor of that glorious Place; where are many glorious *Mansions* Prepared by our glorified Redeemer; where there are a glorious company of Sinless and Pure Angels, and Purified Spirits, made perfect for ever: And a glorious and unchangeable State of *Rest* and Reward for ever without Sin, Suffering or Temptation: And all this while their Bodies are paying their debt to the Dust, and passing through corruption, as it were performing their last Sleep, only in order to a more joyful awakening, & Resurrection unto an endless Life, in the last day. But the final perfection and absolute consummation of this promised Salvation, shall be after the *Resurrection*, when upon the final appearance of our Lord Jesus to the last Judgment, and reunion of Soul and Body, they shall be solemnly adjudged, and openly declared, to be really what they were Living and Dying the blessed and redeemed of the Lord Jesus; and shall be invited with a *Come ye blessed of my Father*; and ushered in, and put into an eternal and uninterrupted Possession of an incorruptible Crown, and *Heavenly Kingdom*, wherein both Body and Soul, shall be clothed for ever with incorruptible Glory, that fadeth not away. And this is that inconceivable *Salvation* Promised in our Text; which therefore in our Text is called the *Salvation of God*, as He is the Author, Giver and Finisher thereof in every Soul.

Secondly; We have the *Persons* particularly described to whom this Promise is made: 'Tis not to every One, neither to every Man or Woman that takes up with a Name, and *Profession* of Religion, of whatso-

ever Mode it be; but to him or her only, who *Ordereth his or her Conversation aright*. Many, if not most, desire *Salvation*, but among the many, who flatter themselves with the groundless hopes of well being, in a future Life; few shall really find this *Salvation* in our Text: none but such as have a conscientious regard to their Lives, *Conversation* and Practice, toward God, others, and themselves; for *Conversation* is very large and extensive, comprehending the whole of a mans *Life*, all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; which must be rectified, regulated, and *Set in Order* according to the direction of Gods Word, and the Divine Law; for it is to him, and only him, who *Ordereth his Conversation aright*, God will shew his *Salvation*. Having thus opened the Words, I raise this Proposition, which naturally flows from the Text.

**That a well Ordered Conversation is the only Map, to Eternal Salvation.**

I call it not the *Meritorious Cause*, not the *Efficacious Procuring Cause*; not having any *Purchasing Price* of condignity to deserve *Salvation* for any; for that were to assert down-right *Popish Merit*, in derogation to *Free Grace*, and the Efficacious Merits of our Redeemer; but I assert and maintain it, for all *Adult Believers*, to be the *Path Way to the Kingdom of Heaven*: Therefore Divines do not unjustly call it, *Via Regni*, tho' not *Causa Regnandi*, the *Way* to the Kingdom, tho' not the *Cause* of our Reigning. And it is agreeable to the Sentiments of the Wisest of meer men, Prov. 11. 19. *As righteousness tendeth to Life; so he that pursueth Evil, pursueth it to his own Death.* 12. ch. 28. v. *In the way of righteousness, is Life, and in the path way thereof, there is no Death*: With which the Apostle Paul concurs, Heb. 12. 14. *Follow Peace with all men, and Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

And thus I intend to handle it, and as the Lord shall enable me, prosecute briefly my Doctrine in this

following Method. (1) What is *Presupposed*, by an *Orderly Walk, and Conversation*. (2) What a *well ordered Conversation* is or wherein it does consist. (3) *Reasons* are to be offered, why a *Well-ordered Conversation* is highly necessary as the way to Salvation. (4) What is necessary, and requisite for *promoting*, and advancing this *Well-ordered Conversation*, which is so highly necessary to Salvation. (5) What usually and most ordinarily *hinders*, and obstructs, this *Well-ordered Conversation*. (6) I shall make a *Practical Application* of a most *Practical Doctrine*, in sundry Uses.

I shall prosecute these Heads of Doctrine as I have proposed them, and in the same order; And the first thing to be cleared, is, What is *presupposed*, by this *Well-ordered Conversation*? and the things plainly presupposed are these. 1. That the generality of mankind, both without, and within the Church, are naturally irregular and *disorderly* in Life, *Conversation*, and practice. For since man Apostatized, and fell, or departed from the Living God, deviated from Innocency, and voluntarily swerved from that innate Rule, under the perfect, and intire conduct whereof he was Created, he has made himself prone to err, and go astray; he is born in Sin, conceived in iniquity, and by nature *goes astray from the womb*, Psal. 58. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray, as soon as they be born, speaking lies*; for if it were not thus, what necessity of a Rule; and directions, to regulate our Lives, according to this Rule, if our Lives were not irregular and disorderly, and wholly out of course, altogether out of frame, both as to the outward and inward man; therefore he is *recalled* to take heed unto his walk, and way, to remind the prescribed Rule, and follow the direct dictates of that *Canon*, that if complied with, is able to *make the man of God perfect*. The Unregenerate Sinner, his life is most irregular, as you have it evidenced, Eph. 2. 2. 3. *They walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now work-*

*eth in all the children of disobedience ; among whom we all had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others.* Thus you may find it is, and was, and will be with all mankind by nature ; nothing but sin, disorder, and disobedience, to be found in them ; disorderly, irregular thoughts, and imaginations, vain, evil, and sinful ; words irregular, and besides the rule, offensive to God, polluting and defiling to men, and afflicting or wounding, to a self-accusing and awakened Conscience, and a life filled with irregular, and disorderly actions, omitting or neglecting those things, which ought to be done, and committing, or doing those things, we are under many obligations not to do ; so as God may justly upbraid such for their rebellious disregard, as he did justly the Children of *Israel*, by the Prophet, Isa. 1. 2. *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me.*

2. *A Well-ordered Conversation*, supposes a *Rule* and *Canon*, for the direction and regulation of all, in the whole man, as to *Life, Conversation, or Practice* ; for if it were not so, a direction, to order our Conversations aright, in order to the *Salvation* of our Soul, would be vain and needless. And our *Conversations* or *Lives* are orderly, or disorderly, as they are guided and governed by that *Rule* ; or not conformed thereto. For every Sin, is nothing else but a *Transgression of the Law*, a violation of, or deviation from, that *Rule*. And by this *Rule* our actions shall be detected, and *Conversations* judged and tryed. And it is termed from the Spirit of God, *a walking according to rule*, Gal. 6. 16. *To as many as walk according to rule.* It is called a walking in the *Law* of the Lord, Psal. 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.* It is called a *taking heed to our ways, according to Gods Word*, v. 9. And this *Rule* and *Canon*, is the *Revealed Will, Law & mind* of God,

which is a clear, a perfect, universal, and extensive *Rule*, and *Canon*, directing us in the management of our very thoughts, and intentions of our Souls, beyond the power and vertue of all humane Laws. It is a *bridle*, and gives check to our unruly *tongues*, and regulates our very words, without which all *Religion is judged vain*, Jam. 1. 26. *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that mans Religion is vain.* Our very ordinary Communication, is limited, and our *Conversation in words*, tyed by this Rule, even to the avoiding what is filthy, and promoting what tends to edification. How little regard is had hereunto, by this Licentious Age, who glory in *Oaths*, and *Curses*, exercise their Wit and Parts, in all *Obscenities*, Ribaldry and *Profaneness*, mocking and ridiculing, and hissing at all *Conversation*, any way tending to the honour of God, and edification of our Neighbour; And even this, by such as make no small pretence to Religion, and Devotion. But it is also a *Rule* and guide for our *Lives*, and *Actions*, instructing and guiding all men, how to demean themselves towards God, our Neighbour, and ourselves, both what we are to *forbear* and abstain from, and in doing our duty, *Tit. 2. 11, 12, For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.* So it is most evident, a Well-ordered Conversation does suppose a *Rule & Canon* to live & walk by. 3. An other particular supposed by a *Well-ordered Conversation*, according to the Rule of Gods Word and Law, is, that it is a matter of great *moment*, and of no small concern to our Souls. It is no matter of indifferency to any, nor a trifling concern; for we find a large share of the Scriptures taken up about it, and the *universal scope* of the Word of God is to direct, instruct, promote and accomplish this thing; not only to assume a name, to fill our heads with fruitless notions, and empty speculations, or gain a religious reputation, but a *godly life*, and *Religious*

*Conversation*, is to be chosen above all; *The tree is known by its fruit; bring forth therefore fruits meet for Repentance.* This is the principal and great concern, to qualifie us for Heaven, to fit us for Salvation; even regulating our lives, and ordering our Conversations aright; seeing *Without holiness no man shall see the face of God in peace.* Secondly, I proceed to describe or shew to you, what a *Well-ordered Conversation* is, or wherein it consists. And this is the next head, and so requisite to be explained, that I cannot apprehend how any can be convinced of the want thereof, or engaged to promote, advance, or seek after a *Well-ordered Conversation*, without some distinct and clear notions about it; therefore it consists in these things. 1. In a Life and *Conversation* purged and purified from *Sin* and wickedness. And this is the first step, towards a *Well-ordered Conversation*; for the Lives and Conversations of all men by nature, and from our apostate state of Rebellion, are *impure*, sinful and unclean; we are a *Seed of Evil Doers, Children that are corruptors*; Our lives naturally, and without grace, and before Conversion, are very irregular and *disorderly*; and those *disorderly* things must be laid aside, and the evils of our lives must be purged away; and as it is *Sin*, that disordereth the life, and defileth the *Conversation*; so it is *Sin*, and *Sin* only, our lives must be purged and purified from, and this is required by many *Precepts*, multiplied *threatnings*, enlarged, and renewed *Promises*, and many awakening *Instances*. And it is sometimes called a *Departing from Iniquity*, 2. Tim. 2. 19. *Let every one, that Nameth the Name of Christ, depart from iniquity. A departing from evil.* Psal. 34. 14. *It is called a ceasing to do evil.* Isa. 1. 16. *Cease to do evil, and learn to do well. A forsaking our wayes that are not good,* Isa. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. A denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts;* Tit. 2. 12. *A cleansing our hands, and purifying our hearts;* Jam. 4. 8. *Cleanse your*

hands ye Sinners, and purifie your hearts ye double minded. And frequently called a turning from Sin, Turn ye, turn ye ; If the wicked turn from his way ; turn unto me, saith the Lord of hosts. You see then my friends, what is your *first work*, there must be a rooting out, and plucking up the sinful and corrupt weeds in our Souls, if we would have Grace planted, and Vertue grow there ; we must purge away the spots and stains, if we would appear beautiful in the eyes of our God : We must lay aside the *disorders* and irregularities of our Lives, if we would have them *orderly* and regular. The profane *Curser* and *Swearer*, must lay aside his horrid *Oaths*, and rather impious *Imprecations*. The beastly and sensual *Drunkard*, must abstain from his intemperate Cups and Companions. The *Unclean Person*, must leave his Whoredoms. The *Backbiter* must forsake his Railings and Defamation. The *Liar* must learn to speak truth to his Neighbour. The *Thief* and Purloiner, must grow honest. The *profaner of the Day of the Lord*, must learn to spend it more religiously. And the profligate and profane *Scoffer* at the Creatures of God, the People and Followers of God, the Way, Worship and Religion of God, must lay aside this base abuse of their tongues. These Evils and many more, as *Pride*, *Covetousness*, *Carnality* and *Worldliness*, must be purged out of our Lives, and our *Conversations* cleansed from them, if we would promote a *Well-ordered Conversation* in the World. 2. A *Well-ordered Life and Conversation*, consists in a conformity, and agreeableness to the Holy *Laws*, and Sovereign Commands of Heaven. For God the powerful *Creator* of all things, is also the Supreme and Sovereign *Law-giver*, who prescribes Rules to his Creatures, wherein and whereby every thing is *prohibited*, we are to forsake and abstain from ; And every thing is *Commanded* & Required we should perform and do. And the World was involved in such a Labyrinth of Darkness & Corruption, man would not have known what was to be done,

or what was to be left undone, if God from Heaven had not told us by his *Revealed Law*. And such is the nature of this Divine Law, and the Commands of Heaven, that they are most *Holy, Just and Good*, adapted by Infinite Wisdom, to advance our Happiness here and hereafter. And a *Conversation* answerable to this Divine Rule, both in Negatives and Positives, in the only *Well-ordered Conversation*, in the world; for all disorders in Life, are nothing else but a deviation from that Rule, and a contradiction to that Law. This is a further step, and a higher degree of a *Well-ordered Conversation* than the former; and the first step consisting only in the negative part of Religion; but in this is comprehended both *positives* and *negatives*, a compliance with the Laws of Heaven. And this is called a *Keeping the Commandments*. Joh, 14. 15. If ye love me, keep my Commandments: *A doing the will of the Lord*: Mat. 7. 21. *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the will of the Father which is in Heaven.* A Conversation agreeable to *First Table* Commands and *Second Table* Commands, and to Gospel Precepts, is the only *regular Conversation*. How much therefore is it the concern of every Soul, to be acquainted with this Law, and to make conscience of conforming their Lives thereunto.

3. A *Well-ordered Life and Conversation*, consists in being adorned with the shining Grace, and gracious fruits of the Spirit of God; wherein the *Gifts* and *Graces* of the *Renewing Spirit of God* are legible and conspicuous, even in all parts of *Conversation*. This distinguishes the life of a *Christian*, from the Conversation of the most refined and polished *Moralists* in the world, and renders the Conversation of a true sincere *Christian*, to surpass by far the lives of *Pagans*. The true *Christian*, in all states of life whether in Prosperity or Adversity, in fullness or in want, in sickness or in health, in suffering or liberty, under reproaches, or in good report, under enjoyment, or want of Religi-

ous Privileges; is furnished with graces answerable, and exercises them suitably and agreeably: So as his whole life should shine with them, as a light in a dark place. *The fruits of the Spirit of God* in believing Souls, with which their *Conversations* should shine are enumerated by the Apostle, Gal. 5, 22, 23. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.* And the Apostle Paul recommends them to us, *Phil. 4. 8. Finally Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any vertue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* And these, and such as these, must be the shining *Ornaments* of a *Well-ordered Conversation*. Such as our Saviour speaks of in his Sermon on the Mount, Mat. 5. 10. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven.*

4. A *Well-ordered Conversation*, is a Conversation suitable and agreeable to our *Christian Calling*, and holy Vocations, or answerable to the *Gospel Privileges* and *Obligations* we are under; for as the Privileges of men, as *rational Creatures*, are great beyond the brutal world; so the Privileges of the *Christian World*, is justly great, beyond the *Pagan*, enjoying many benefits and immunities which they want; for beyond the *light of Nature*, and *reason*, they have the *oracles of God*, and the lamp of Gods Law, for their instruction and direction. Those without the Church, are *Aliens* and *Strangers*, but *Christians* have a *Covenant-relation* to God, and have embraced him as their God and Father, they have frequent intercourse and communion with God in duties, access to God by Prayer, in all troubles, wants and difficulties; and a Mediator always at the Right-hand of God, to intercede for them; and the perpetual promise of God's Spirit, and presence to be with them in all their performance to the end of the world. And as their

*Priviledges* are great, so their *Obligations* are weighty and solemn; for they have renounced the *Devil*, abandoned the *World*, and renounced the *Flesh* and *Corruption*; lifted and enrolled themselves among the number of *Christ's Followers*, submitting unto him as the *Captain of their Salvation*, engaging to fight under his banner. And as these are the *priviledges* and *obligations* of a *Christian*, the *holy Calling* and *true Vocation* of a *Believer*, must call for, and require an *answerableness*, and becoming *suitableness* of *Life* and *Conversation* in all *Professors* thereof. And this is frequently required and recommended under the *Gospel*, *Phil.* 1. 27. *Only let your Conversation be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ.* *Eph.* 4. 1. I therefore the *Prisoner of the Lord* beseech you, that you walk worthy of the *Vocation* wherewith ye are called. *Col.* 1. 10. *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord, being fruitful in every good work.* *1 Thes.* 2. 12. *That you would walk worthy of God who hath called you to his Kingdom and Glory.* How *demeaning* is it, for such as are called to so *high dignities*, and enjoy so *great priviledges*, to act beneath their *priviledges* or *calling*, or live a *life inconsistent* therewith? for all persons should act like the *station* they are in, and sure the *Christian* above all others in the *world* has reason to *regulate his Conversation* suitable to his *Christian Calling* and *holy Vocation*. How *unbecoming* is it for *Children of Light*, to walk and live as in *Darkness*? for such as profess themselves *Children of God*, to speak and act as *Children of the Devil*? therefore the *Apostle Paul*, *Eph.* 4. 17. advises the *Ephesians* *not to walk as the Gentiles do, but according to their holy calling, & Christian profession.*

5. A *Well-ordered Life and Conversation* consists, in being *answerable* to the various *Stations, Capacities* and *Relations*, whereunto we are called, and placed of *God* in the *world*; whether as *Superiours, Inferiours* or *Equals*. For we must look upon all *Christians* in a *twofold Capacity*; first, in respect to their *General*

*Calling* and Vocation as Christians, which is common to all, and calls for a Walk and Conversation suitable thereunto, as you have heard. Next we must look upon them, in a more *limited Capacity*, as *related* to one another in a more *Particular Calling*; as some are *Superiours*, whether in Families, in the State, or in the Church: So some are *Inferiours* on all those accounts, for they are relatives; and others are *Equals* of the same station and capacity. And it is the superlative excellency of the *Christian Religion*, and a demonstration of the fullness of the Scriptures, that there are Duties for all Ranks and Stations, prescribed and taught there; for the Sins incident to all degrees and ranks of men & women, are detected and reprov'd there. *Magistrates* and *Rulers* in the Government and State, have their work cut out to their hands, and are limited and bounded by the *Supream Law* of an Universal Sovereign, to whom the greatest of them must be accountable. The *Subjects* oweth Subjection, Loyalty and Obedience to his just and lawful Commands, for he is the *Minister of God for good*: And this is due by virtue of a Divine Command & Appointment; but if he exceeds his power, and require anything sinful or repugnant to the Laws of God, the Apostles rule is still observable, *God is to be obeyed rather than man*. *Ministers* of the Gospel owe many duties to God and his people, in that relation: *People* are in many things indebted by the Law of God to their Ministers, in the execution of their Office, which God will require at their hands. Many also are the *Relative Duties of Parents & Children, Husbands & Wives, Masters and Servants*; all which are required to make up a *Well-ordered Conversation*, not excluding the duties of equity, truth and Justice, due from *Equals* to one another. And if the *Christian Religion* were regarded by all ranks and stations, none in the world would be compared with them. Therefore it was not a vain nor groundless challenge one of the Ancients made, when he challenged all the world, *to shew so good Magis-*

*trates and Subjects, Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, as the Christian Religion is able to produce.* And all Christians would excel the whole world if they would but live as becomes their General and Special Callings, and Vocations. 6. A *Well-ordered Conversation*, is a *Heavenly Conversation*, or a *Conversation in Heaven*, above the terrene, carnal and base things of this world; so to live, and so to act, as if they appeared not *κοσμοπολιται*, *Citizens of this World*, but belong to a Superiour and more *intellectual World*. This the Apostle Paul professes, Phil. 3. 20. *Our conversation is in heaven*, that is, we have not this World, but Heaven for our City: Therefore if we would expect Heaven in the *end*, we must *begin* and in some measure live a life of *heaven upon earth*; every thing should tend *Heavenward*; daily preparing for *Heaven*, and so speaking or acting, as if you were bound for *Heaven*, employed about *heavenly things*, and elevated above the concerns of this *Lower World*, only using the most desirable things thereof, as Travellers to the *New-Jerusalem*, as if we used them not: Making sure of an interest in the *Heavenly Canaan*; making our *acquaintance* with the Inhabitants of the *Upper World*, frequently conversing there by faith and contemplation, carrying on a constant *trade* and *traffick* with Heavenly Prayer and Supplication; having their hearts and souls, *Soaring aloft*, and ardently breathing after their Crown & Kingdom; *placing their affections on things above*, where their *treasures* are: Yea, their chief ends, aims and endeavours tending and inclining that way. And this is a *Conversation in Heaven*, and so a *Well-ordered Conversation*. Thus you have a regular Conversation described in the six foregoing particulars.

The third thing we have to do, is to produce *Reasons*, why a *Well-ordered Conversation*, is of so great concern and moment, as the *Way to Salvation*. And this will appear unquestionable from these *Reasons*.

1. Because our *Salvation*, acceptance with God, &

entrance to his Kingdom, are not promised to an *external profession*, or any thing else, below an *obedient Life and Conversation*. Many may arrive high, and get a name and reputation in the Churches of Christ, and in External Profession and Performances, out-strip many sincere Christians, and yet for want of *Obedience*, *Holiness*, and a *Well-ordered Conversation*, shall come short of the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 7. 21. *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father.* Consider this ye that boast of your *Professions*, and value your selves from your *seeming* and visible *Devotions*, take this as the mind of God, that nothing below *doing* the will of God, in a *Well-ordered Conversation*, shall recommend you for acceptance with God; for *without Holiness no man shall see his face.*

2. Because we shall be all *judged* at the Last Day by our *Lives and Conversations*, and not by *Professions*, or any thing else. This renders a *Well-ordered Conversation* the most necessary and requisite to us, of any thing in the world: Seeing it will not be enquired, *What Faith* you professed? *What Perswasion* and *Opinion* you were of? to what *Society* did you belong? But what have you *done*? what *Lives and Conversations* have you Led? Were they *Ordered aright* according to my will? This will be the procedure in Judgment, Rev. 22. 12. *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man,* according as his works shall be, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Is there any thing should awaken Sinners more, to receive the truth of my Doctrine than this, that it is by our *Conversations* we shall be all Judged in the Great Day?

3. Another Reason for the truth of this point, it is the *fruit, benefit and consequence* of our *Redemption* by our *Lord Jesus Christ*. wherefore descended he from the *Glorious Throne* of his Majesty, but to exalt and

lift us up, out of the *deep pit*, and miry clay of our Sin and Corruption? Wherefore was he *Sent*, but to *turn Sinners from their Iniquities*? Wherefore did he *Offer himself* a Sacrifice to Divine Justice? it was that he might ransom, and *purchase a people to himself, zealous of good works*. And what is all this, but to promote and advance a *Well-ordered walk and Conversation*. This you have abundantly evidenced from Scripture, Acts 3. 26. *Unto you first God having raised up Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his Iniquities*. Here is the first and principal step towards a *Well-ordered Conversation*, turning Sinners from their Iniquities; and that by the Mission and Redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, Tit, 2. 14. *Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*. Here is the *whole* of the *Conversation* in my Text accomplished in, and upon us by our Lord Jesus, and this as the only way to Salvation; which is confirmed to us further by the same Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 15.

4. A *Well-ordered Conversation* is highly necessary as the way to Salvation, because it is the *native fruit* and consequence of *Regeneration*, or a gracious conversation; and without a suitable and agreeable Conversation, men cannot justly lay claim to the *New-birth*, and if Strangers to Regeneration, and while such, they have no right to the *Kingdom of God*, Joh, 3. 3. 2 Cor. 5. *If any man be in Christ, he is a New-creature, old things are passed away, and all things are become new*. New thoughts, new words, new actions, new ends and aims, and consequently new Conversation. Eph. 2. 10. *For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained, that we should walk in them*. Hence it is plain and clear, that a *Well-ordered Conversation*, is so necessary to your *Eternal Salvation*; that I dare boldly affirm, and that from the Word of God; your most plausible *Performances*, and most specious *Professions*, shall never rec-

commend you to Heaven without it: You have not tasted of the saving fruits of Christ's Death and Redemption, if the holy effects and blessings thereof, are not visible in your Lives and Practice. Neither are ye *Regenerate* if you are not *New-creatures*; and consequently most unfit, to appear at the bar of God's Justice.

Fourthly, I proceed to shew what is necessary and requisite for promoting and advancing this Well-ordered Conversation, which is so highly necessary, as the way to our Salvation: And there are many things requisite for the advancing the same. As,

1. True and Sincere *Repentance for Sins past*, is highly necessary, for promoting a Well-ordered Conversation for time to come. You must pluck up and pull down your *Old Sins*, and your former Irregularities, whatever they have been, if ye would erect a *new scheme of Conversation* in the world. You must not imagine to build a righteous *Superstructure*, upon a rotten and sinful foundation: Therefore we are commanded, first, *to depart from evil, & then do good*. First *to cease to do evil*, then *to learn to do well*; First, *to put away the evil of our doings*, and then *to make our ways and our doings good*. As the Husbandman must hew down and grub up his Field, ere he can sow and reap the fruit of his labour: So must the Sinner lay the *Ax of Repentance* to the *Root* of his old Sins, if he would bring forth the *fruits of Righteousness* in his life. Hos. 10. 12. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, and reap in mercy: And how shall this be done, *Plough up your fallow ground*. Would you lead righteous or religious lives, you must return and fall foul of your old sins, and spare them not, but repent and turn from them. How necessary this pungent and heart-piercing *Repentance* is to Eternal Life and Salvation, we are oft told, Luk. 13. 5. *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*. And what this *Repentance* is, may as easily be learned; that it is a *turning* from, a leaving & forsaking Sin: *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Let the wicked forsake his way*. Here is your founda-

*tion work*, if you would regulate your Conversations for time to come: Reform your old transgressions. Let every Man and Woman leave their *Worldliness*, their *Uncleanness*, *Drunkenness*, their *Swearing*, *Cursing*, and all other Impieties; for while these and other evils are untouched, and reigning in the Soul, all your *Righteousness* is but hypocrisie & vain show. 2. Another way to promote righteous and regular *lives*, is to maintain and submit to a Godly and Faithful *Ministry*. This is that ancient mean and method, both for beginning, advancing and propagating *Religion* in the World. God gave to his Church of old, *Ministers*, *Messengers*, and *Prophets*, to instruct and direct Sinners what to do, and what to forbear, shewing a pattern and example in their lives, delivering the promises from Heaven, for the encouragement of Righteousness, and thundring out threatned Judgments of future wrath, against all their Unrighteousness; watching over them, and *crying aloud*, and not sparing, but telling even the People of God their transgression: the Righteousness of *Nations*, and particular *Persons* was advanced this way. And was not this the end of their Mission to an irregular People, and a rebellious Nation, to turn them from Sin, and advance true *Righteousness*, both among Rulers and People. This was the design of a *Gospel Ministry* to bring in and exalt *Righteousness*, far beyond that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*: Therefore *John* the Harbinger of our Lord began his Ministry with the Doctrine of *Repentance*, which our Lord confirmed, and recommends to the World, as his *holy Yoke*, recommending his own righteous Life and blameless *Conversation*, as their pattern; *Learn of me*, saith our Lord. Wherefore did our Lord send forth the *Twelve*, and afterwards the *Seventy*, but to *teach all Nations*? and what were they to be taught? To *observe whatever God commanded them*: Therefore he gives to his Church *Pastors* and *Teachers*, for the *edifying the Body of Christ*, or building up the body in faith and righteousness. Were they not sent into

an irregular, disorderly world, to convince them of their *Irregularities*, and call them unto *Holiness*, & all this by the *Preaching* of the Gospel, and their *Exemplary Lives*? And what *pains* did they take? what *Risques* did they run? what *Difficulties* did they encounter, to promote, and propagate Gospel-righteousness, and a *Conversation* answerable. This is the great scope of their *Doctrines* and *Epistles*, condemning Sin, and encouraging Holiness. And where there is no *Ministry*, or *Unfaithful Watchmen*, Sin & Iniquity abounds, and Irreligion prevails; for Ministers of Christ should not only stand in the Gap, to keep off the imminent & threatned judgments of Heaven from their People, and Flock by Prayer, and pleading; but should always be standing *in the Gap*, to keep out an inundation of sin and profane irregularities in Life, and Conversation, by their plain & free *Doctrines*, their fervent Prayers, and frequent Supplications, their seasonable and bold reproofs, by their instructing and exemplary lives; endeavouring by all means to engage their Hearers, to lives becoming the Gospel of Christ.

3. Another effectual mean and method for *advancing* & promoting *regularity* and order in Lives and *Conversations*, is the *Civil Magistrates Concurrence* with the *Ministers*, and executing duly, and impartially, paenal *Laws* against scardalous Offenders, and *visible Immortality*. Some offences are cognizable by *Officers* and *Magistrates* in the State, as all are censurable by the *Ministry*, and what they cannot do by the *Word*, the *Magistrate* is to do by the *Sword*; for *Magistracy* is an Ordinance of God, and they are invested with his own *Name*; *I have said ye are gods*; and they are appointed not to be a *terror to good works*, but to the *evil*, Ro. 13. 3. And he is cloathed with power to execute this authority on Offenders, v. 4. *For he is the Minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*. And that the Magistrate may do his duty, *Paenal Laws* against Vice, and Immorality must be made, and no *Christian State* can be

safe without them. And blessed be God, there are so many good Laws made in our *English* Constitution & ratified in this and the late Reigns, against the common *Immoralities* of this Age, and earnestly recommended to Magistrates in all their Dominions, for the due execution of them; which would effectually prevent innumerable immoralities, that are scandalous to the Christian Religion; Would beastly *Drunkeness* be so common, *Swearing* and *Cursing*, so ordinary a Dialect, *Whoredom* so impudent, *Profanation of the Lords Day* so visible and frequent, if our Rulers & *Magistrates* every where were spirited with zeal, for putting our *Paenal Laws* in execution against scandalous Offenders. A noble pattern is proposed to all Magistrates and others in Her Majesties Dominions, by zealous *Societies* of men, formed and erected in *London, Dublin,* & other places, who have been successful to a miracle, in putting a stop to that current of *Visible Profanity*, which is a just *reproach* to Christian Nations, and an intollerable scandal to our Christian Profession. Would to God such as are in Authority, and vested with the Sword of Justice, were exercising it boldly and faithfully against Sin, and all Immoralities in Life and Conversation, and that impartially, according to their Oaths and Office. Some would be ashamed, and others afraid, and so all would study a *Reformation*, from their disorders and irregularities.

5. Another thing that would promote and advance an orderly life, and *regular Conversation* in the world, is frequent and serious *Meditation* and reflections on *Death* and *Judgment* to come, and the consequences of them. Would men dare to live as they do? Would they not soon *resolve* and *begin* to *rectify* their lives, and *regulate their Conversations*, if they did but duly contemplate, that approaching *Change*, intailed on all Mortals, as a just debt due to the unchangeable appointment of Heaven? Would the profane and dissolute neglect his just homage to his God, rebel against his Maker, fly in the face of Heaven, & abuse the

rational Creature, if he but considered, how soon he may be dissolved, and return to dust ; which will put an end to the day of his Salvation, & dash the hope of the profane and the hypocrite, and remove them beyond all possibility of repenting, believing or praising God. And more especially, if they were taking a view and prospect of that future *account* that is to be given, at the *Tribunal of God*, of all our actions and deeds done in the body, and the eternal consequences of *Weal* or *Wo*, which must follow that impartial *Judgment*. Would not serious reflecting thoughts of these things, have strong influence upon all our words and actions in this world, when we consider *our Lord shall come in flaming fire* against the disorderly and disobedient, and execute his vengeance on such? 2 *Thes.* 1. 8. And it is very observable to all conversant in the Scriptures, that where *Death* and *Judgment* are treated of, the practical inference is to affect and influence our lives and practice, and such an improvement is particularly made by the Apostle *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. *Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation & godliness.* 1 *Thes.* 5. 2, 6. *The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. Therefore let us watch and be sober.*

6. Another thing which would highly advance a *Well-ordered Conversation*, were a regular *Discipline* duly exercised in the Church. For as Kings and Princes have their Laws for Government in their several Dominions, and a power lodged in the hands of *particular persons specially qualified*, for executing said Laws : So our Lord Jesus Christ has prescribed *Spiritual Laws*, and constituted a *Suitable Government* and *Spiritual Rule* in his Church, intrusted to particular persons, to be duly executed upon Offenders, and this *Discipline* is to be employed about such as are *within*, and not *without* the *Visible Churches*. And this *Government*, or *Discipline*, is specially distinct from the *Secular Power*, and is called the *Power of*

*the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*; for shutting the Kingdom against the impenitent, & opening it, both by Word and Discipline, to the humble and penitent. And this Spiritual Rule and Government, is appointed by our Lord Jesus, not only for reclaiming & gaining *irregular* and offending Brethren, but for deterring other's from the like offences, and also for purging out that corrupt and sinful *Leaven*, that if not taken away, will defile the whole lump; and this *Discipline* is executed by *Censure*, or *Reproof*, *Admonition*, *Suspension* from the *Lords Table*, and *Excommunication* from the Church, whereby they are rejected, and given up to Satan, till they return by unfeigned Repentance. And such proceedings with Delinquents, is not to punish their *Bodies*, or mulct their *Estates*, but for afflicting the *Consciences* of Offenders by Censure and Conviction, according to the nature or demerit, and circumstances of their Crimes, and all these steps of procedure to be levelled at, and designing, not the hurt or *destruction* of the party, but his *good* to edification, and Salvation. That we have Scripture warrant & Authority for this *Government*, and Censure, for reclaiming from, and preventing *irregularities*, and scandalizing offences, among Professors, is undeniable, with as many as are conversant in Sacred Record. That our Lord Jesus has such a *Government*, and Rule, as Mediator and Head of his own Church, is not only included, but plainly expressed, in the Prophetical Promise of him, Isa. 9. 6. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder.* And what this *Government* should be, our Lord himself decides the point, saying, *My Kingdom is not of this world.* Authority to exercise this power in the Churches, we have in the promise made by our Lord to *Peter*, only in the name of the rest. Mat. 16. 19. *And I will give unto you the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall*

be loosed in heaven. And for particular direction executing this power, view Mat, 18, 15, 16, 17. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he will hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother: but if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more; and if he neglect to hear them tell it unto the Church, & let him be unto thee as a heathen man and publican.* And if any would have an instance, for putting in execution, this power of *Discipline*, you have in the regular proceeding of the Church against the incestuous person, in the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 5, 4, 5. *In the name of the Lord Jesus, when ye are gathered together, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ: To deliver such an one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* And all Christians are commanded to submit to this authoritative Power, and Censure, from such as rule over them. 1 Thes. 5. 12. *Know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.* V. 14. *Warn them that are unruly.* Heb. 13, 17. *Obey them that have rule over you, for they watch for your Souls.* A Church without this *Discipline*, & Censure, is like a Kingdom without Rule & Government: but where this *Watching*, *Admonishing*, and *Censuring*, and *Suspending Power of Discipline*, is impartially and jealously exercised, it prevents a multitude of *Irregularities*, which would scandalize Christian Societies, and promote more *Irregularities* among Professors of the Christian Religion.

Fifthly, I proceed to discover those *Obstructions* and *Impediments*, that ordinarily and usually hinder and mar a *Regular Walk* and *Conversation*, which is so necessary to the Salvation of Souls: and they are these.

1. The first obstruction to an *Orderly or Regular Life*, or cause of *Irregularities of Conversation*, is *Ignorance*, which is the mother and parent of *Error*, both

in judgment and practice, and not of *Devotion*, as some would have it. And can any thing beget irregularities more than *ignorance* of God, of his Being, Existence & Perfections; *ignorance* of his Purity and Holiness, who cannot behold Iniquity, without indignation; of his Omniscience and Omnipresence, whereby he seeth and knoweth all things, even the hidden and secret works of darkness. *Ignorance* of his Justice and Severity, whereby he will not suffer Sin to pass unpunished, and escape his Just vengeance, without repentance and pardon. *Ignorance* of his Laws, the Rule and Test of Good and Evil. *Ignorance* of our own Actions, whether right or wrong, and of the tremendous consequences of unpardoned Guilt, and of the inextricable and unsupportable miseries that attend disobedience, impenitency and ignorance. I say, *Ignorance* of these, and what else concerns us to know, is the culpable cause of innumerable enormities, and intolerable irregularities, in the lives of all, who are so inexcusably guilty of this *inexcusable ignorance*, prevailing in the present day of our Gospel light. Hos. 4. 1, 2. *Because their is no knowledge of God in the Land, by swearing & lying, and killing & stealing & committing Adultery, they break forth, and blood toucheth blood.*

2. Another cause of *irregular living*, and great impediment to an *Orderly Conversation*, is a careless *Irreligious Education*; which is the lot of many, & the bane of thousands, who were born and nurtured in Families, where no Godly or Religious Instruction is enjoyed, no true Religion is practiced, or performed; neither are any imitable or desirable patterns presented for imitation. How many are there among such as call, and repute themselves *Christian Families*, where many are born and propagated, to succeed them in their Families, and Estates, and bear their names: but few educated to honor and glorifie God, and trained up to walk, when young, *in the way they should go?* and when neglected, or corrupted in their *first Education*, and tender years it is a hard matter to rectifie them,

after *habits of sin*, during the following course of their lives. Neglect of *Family Religion*, promotes as much Irreligion, as any one thing beside. Many Parents will labor hard, rise up early, and [sit up\*] late, to provide for the *Backs* and *Bellies* of their Children, and he is worse than an Infidel, that does not; but what must they be, that take no care of, and make no provision for their *Souls*, but ruin them by sinful indulgence, & so train up Vassals for the Devil, instead of training up Servants for the Living God. Parents are commanded to bring up their Children in the *admonition of the Lord*. And as *Youth* and tender years are fittest for bearing the *Yoke* of Religion; so the most suitable for receiving impressions of Divine Knowledge and *habits of right living*: For want of which early and Christian *Education*, many run naturally, *as the sparks fly upwards*, to a thousand disorders, & all excess of riot; and how can they do otherwise, who in their early & tractable years are neither taught by *precept*, nor president; but daily tempted by their sinful inclinations, & insatiable appetites; and daily conquered by the power of evil example, from such perhaps, who should have been their instructors, and must account for it one day.

3. How many are marred and hindred in the course of regular and *Christian living*, by the powerful influence of sinful and evil *Example*; and tho' all *Example*, and especially what is evil, is armed with too charming a power over our carnal minds; so the more *common* and *universal* Examples are, the more *conquering*. And the greater the patterns are, the more *mischievous* are they. *Regis ad Exemplum totus componitur orbis*. How natural is it, for apostate man to *follow the multitude to do evil*? *Evil communications corrupt good manners*. Was it not from repeated evil *examples*, that *Joseph* learned to swear by the Life of *Pharaoh*? It is a hard thing to lead

[ \* Corner of leaf torn off, and words in brackets supplied.]

righteous lives in the midst of multiplied and repeated *evil* presidents; as it is hard to *touch pitch*, and not be defiled therewith; or to put *coals in our bosoms*, and not be burnt therewith. So dangerous is it to associate and frequent profane, and irreligious *Companions* and *Friends*. *Lot* found it no easy matter, to maintain his Righteousness, in the midst of an unrighteous *Sodom*. Therefore when *Rulers* and *Magistrates* give evil Example, who by their Office and Power, should be [*a terror\**] *only to Evil'Doers*. It is no wonder to see people trace their evil steps. When such as are the *Leaders* and *Guides* of Souls go astray, well may the Flock wander. When *Parents* and *Masters* cast daily an evil Copy, must it not *affect* or rather *infect* their Children and Servants? And whoever make sinful company their choice, it is much if they feel not the sinful effects thereof, and have caused at last to *mourn* for it. How many of the Damned in Hell have suffered *Eternal Shipwrack* upon this dangerous Rock of *Evil Company*, by whose sinful *Example*, many have been ruined forever. And nothing more injurious to *Well-ordered Conversations*, than sinful *Example*.

4. Another great impediment to regular and right living, is, *Errors in Judgment*, a latitude or looseness in *Principle* and *Opinion*, which has always a powerful influence, upon words and actions; for the *Understanding* commonly dictates to the *Will*, and the *Will* swaves words & actions of Life, and *Conversation*: Some from *Error in Judgment*, call *good evil*, and *evil good*, and such must go astray in acting. Many suppose, if they take up with some things of *Vertue* and *Christianity* they shall no way be culpable; if they omit and neglect many things, tho' perhaps weightier than these that are done; and so with *Agrippa*, are *almost persuaded*: Others have *loose notions* of *real Religion*, & true *Piety*, and imagine and say, there is

[\* Corner of leaf torn, and words in brackets supplied.]

no need of that *severity* and strictness in walk, which some *Precisians* do cry up, and practice: And from hence indulge themselves in Omissions and Commissions dayly, which causeth such irregularities in Life and Conversations. *Latitudinarian Opinions*, are commonly attended, with an *answerable practice*. Therefore it is that some place Religion is such things as have nothing of true *Vertue* in them: are more strict in these, then the *weightier matters of Gods Law*: As the *Pharisees* were zealous for the *traditions and commandments of men*, and neglected the *weightier matters of the Law*: Others deny the Divine Authority, and Gospel-institution of the *Sealing Ordinance* annexed to the Covenant of Grace, therefore not only live in the neglect of them, but deny and ridicule them. Some in opinion, deny any moral precept in the *Fourth Command*, therefore profane the *Lords Day*, at an Unchristian rate.

5. Another common obstruction to an *Well-ordered Conversation*, is a *habit in Sin*, and Irregularities of Life and Conversation. With many in the world, the beginning of their lives, from a careless and irregular *Education*, has been disorderly; and from their sinful inclinations and corrupt examples, and frequently repeated acts, their course of life grows into a *habit*, and that *habit* becomes fixed like a *second nature*, and consequently not easily left or changed: The Prophet gives his suffrage, with reason and experience in this matter, Jer. 13. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots; then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.* Beware of laying a foundation for, or indulging sinful or irregular habits, lest they grow too strong and invincible for you. Habits, even in indifferent things, are not easily parted with; and *habits in sin*, agreeable to corrupt nature, are most obstinate and tenacious. Therefore it should be the care of all, to cherish all *good beginnings*, to stifle every *first motion* of irregularity, and not suffer it to take deep root, lest it grow to an *incurable habit*. Thus

you have the last particular of the Doctrine; the impediments and hindrances to a Well-ordered Conversation.

I proceed now in the last place, to bring this *Doctrine* more closely to you my Hearers, by a practical *Application* and Improvement. And tho' my Doctrine in its subject matter, be a *practical theme*; yet in pursuing my usual method, I shall apply the Doctrine I have handled. 1. For *Information*. 2. For *Exhortation*. 3. For *Consolation*.

I shall begin this APPLICATION with a few brief *Informations*.

1. That many Professors may go a *great length* in *Conversation* and *Practice*, and yet come *short of Heaven* and *Salvation* at last. This is not to discourage any from *doing*, but that none may delude and deceive themselves, as if *all doing* were meritorious, and *any thing* would recommed, and entitle us to *Happiness*; for many may arrive at a great measure, as to the *positive* and *negative* duties of Religion; They may be *Baptised* with *Simon Magus*, and yet remain in the *gall of bitterness*, and *bond of iniquity*; They may sit down at the *Lords Table*, be received into the bosom of the *Church*, and yet prove *Hypocrites* and *Cast-aways* at last; They may hear the *Preached Gospel*, and *perform Prayer*, and most *External Ordinances*; yea, with the *Young man* in the Gospel, keep many of the *Commandments*; and yet unfit for the *Kingdom of Heaven* at the last. Therefore let us not satisfie our selves with any measure of attainments; for many may have a *name that they live*, and *yet be dead*; and imagine they are rich and *want nothing*, and yet upon a narrow scrutiny and search, be *found poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked*.

2. That our highest *Profession* and *Attainments* in matters of Religion, shall have no acceptance with God, without a *Life* and *Conversation* answerable. *Faith without works is dead*: The *Tree is known by its fruit*: *Knowing* without doing, shall be *beat with many stripes*:

Saying, *Lord, Lord*, will never recommend us to Heaven, without *doing the will of our Heavenly Father*; for by our *works and Practice*, we shall be *judged* in the Great Day of Gods final Judgment of the World.

3. That the *Life and Conversation* of a Christian should be answerable to his *Gifts and Graces*, suitable to his *Station and Vocation* in the world. To whom much is given, of them much is required; much *knowledge*, calls for *much obedience*; a *strong faith*, the *more fruit*: the *higher* our Station or Calling is, the more *shining* and exemplarý should our lives be: The more *Grace* God bestows on us, the more *Obedience* will be required at our hands. Therefore it is not sufficient, that we do as much as others do, that we are as holy and righteous as our neighbours; but is our walk and life answerable to the rule, suitable to the *obligations* we are under to God, his gifts and graces bestowed on us; and answerable to the calling and station we are placed in of God?

Secondly, I come to an Use of *Exhortation*, and that is, to perswade you, as ye tender the welfare of your immortal Souls, you would have a tender regard to your Lives and *Conversations*, that they may be *ordered aright* in the sight of God. Is there any thing my friends in this world that more nearly & awfully concerns us, then so to approve our selves to God, as we may have a right to the *Salvation* of our Souls? The thing it self you are perswaded to, seems inforcing enough without any further argument; but I shall endeavour in the Lords name, and strength, to strengthen the Exhortation now before us, with these moving Considerations.

1. A *Well-ordered Life*, and *regular Conversation*, according to the mind of God is your greatest *gain & interest*; which is the most prevailing and attractive inducement in the world. If any thing will draw men, interest will, and it is to be had by Religion, and found only in the way of God; if the stupid & blinded world

but saw it, & would be perswaded to believe it; for God the eternal and only wise *Law-giver*, has framed a *Law* every way quadrate, & suited to advance our *secular interest*: And if all the wits of the world had been combined in one Counsel, to consult & carve out a rule of obedience, levelled directly to promote our *interest*, and advantage, they could not have fallen upon a more advantageous rule of obedience, then what God has prescribed to us; And *in keeping the Divine Precepts, there is great reward; Godliness being profitable unto all things, having the promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* I shall consider it at present, as it is advantageous to us in *this life*, and that in sundry respects.

1. In respect to our *Bodies*, the advantages of holy and regular living are very conspicuous; for is it not by breaking Gods Rule of Life, and being guilty of *disorders* and irregularities of *Conversation*, we owe all our intemperance and riotous excess, we owe our *diseases*, pains, aches, decay of strength, and all other misfortunes that befall our *Bodies* here? when by *regular living* we should prevent many calamities that befall our mortal bodies even in this life, and oftimes would *prolong our days*, and not be guilty of a lingering and gradual *Suicide*, which many debauched persons really have had a hand in. And I have with concern, observed since I came to *America*, in the year 1683. most of the *Untimely Deaths*, that have happened within the Compass of my knowledge, were occasioned by *excessive irregularities*, of *Sabbath-breaking*, *Drunkeness*, or *vile Whoredom*.

2. As it is profitable to our *Bodies*, to lead orderly lives, so it would be highly advantageous to our *Estates*; for how expensive a darling Sin and Vice has proved to many *Families*, and particular persons, who have been brought, by irregular & riotous living, to want & *Poverty*? and that by sundry ways and means. 1. By *neglecting our Affairs*, our lawful concerns must suffer.

2. Irregular Living consumes that time we should spend

about better things. 3. It justly draws the Indignation of *Heaven* upon all our Concerns, and oftentimes creates a *moth* in our Estates; all which a Religious Life might effectually prevent; and many blessings are entailed upon the Persons, and *Estates*, or Possessions of the Righteous. 4. It would highly conduce to the preserving and maintaining the *Credit* of our Reputation, and *Good Name*; for it is justly sin and disobedience which blasts our Names, and stains our Reputations, and sticks so close, that it oft reaches to *Posterity*; who are infamous from the disorderly and scandalous lives of *Vicious Ancestors*: Whereas Righteousness, not only secures a *good name*, but procures reputation oft times from the worst of men and women. So it is plain, how universally advantageous this *orderly living* really is to as many as have experience thereof, as it may justly be said; *Pietas ipsa sibi merces*.

2. Another moving consideration to engage us to Holiness and Righteousness in Life and *Conversation*, is not only the true gain, and real advantage it brings with it; but the true *value, dignity* and *worth* it really confers on those, who truly have it beyond others. It really *elevates* and *dignifies* them beyond the common rank of men and women, advancing and honouring them in the Sight of God. Prov. 14. 34. *Righteousness exalteth a nation, but Sin is the reproach of a People*. Prov. 12. 26. *The Righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour*. Isa. 43. 4. *Since thou wast precious in my sight thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee*. O how desirable is Religion, upon this account, which redeems and secures from sinful unworthiness, brings us into favour with God, and entitles us to many dignifying favours, to be *joint-heirs with Christ*, through a spirit of adoption; whereby we become *related to the Royal Family* above; and have a right to an Honourable Crown, and a Glorious Kingdom. And it is observable, as Righteousness is truly advancing to Souls; but Sin and Unrighteousness is as really debasing.

3. Another inforcing motive to a right and *well-ordered Conversation*, is the solemn and awful *Vows* and *Obligations* all professed Christians are under, to perform the same; for we are all naturally irregular and perverse, *nemo nascitur bonus sed fit*; therefore God has prepared a firm *Covenant*, and *early Vows*, and plain *Seals*, whereby we are *dedicated* unto God, and solemnly engaged unto our Duty; which is nothing less than renouncing the *Devil*, abandoning all his evil wayes; accepting God, for our God, embracing him for our King and Law-giver; submitting to his Will for our Rule, and promising to conform ourselves thereunto. This is the obligation of every Soul, by *Baptism*; which many deliberately and voluntarily renew at the *Table* of the Lord; so that the *Vows* of the Lord are upon all such; therefore should be paid unto the Lord. Consider this, my Friends, your neglect of Duty, or commission of Sin, whereby your *Conversations* are *disordered*, are a manifest violation of Engagements, and *breach of Vows*, which will be no small aggravation of your guilt in the Day of your Accounts.

4. Another moving argument for a well-ordered Conversation, is the great *reproach*, and manifest *scandal*, that an irregular life, and *disorderly Conversation* brings on the *Christian Religion*, and our holy Profession. What a shame is it to own a *God*, whom we neither honour, adore, nor obey, but daily dishonour, and offend, by our words and actions; to profess a *Worship*, and devotion to him, and in our ordinary *Conversation*, to profane his Name, blaspheme & disown his Attributes; to profess his Ways & Service, & in our lives to fulfil our divers lusts, rebel against our God, and act the works of the *Devil*. What a *scandal* and reproach is it to see those who boast and value themselves as *Christians*, yet acting and speaking what *Pagans* would be ashamed of? Has not the Irregular Lives, and *unsuitable Conversations* of *Professed Christians*, opened the mouths of *Enemies*, and has been, and is still, a *stumbling block*,

in the way of the Conviction of *Jews, Mahometans* and *Pagans*, and a further ground of their hardning in infidelity. It is too notorious, how our *Christian Religion* is evil spoken of, by the pernicious ways of its Followers and Professors. Thus it was in the primitive times of the Apostles. 2 Pet. 2. 2. *And many shall follow pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of Truth is evil spoken of.* And was there ever a time, wherein more occasion was given to all enemies of our holy Religion to reproach and ridicule *Christianity*, than now, while we observe such a contradiction between the lives, and the pretences of the Professors of this Age.

5. A *well-ordered Life, and regular Conversation*, answerable to the Gospel, will be highly *comfortable & rejoicing* in all states and conditions of life; but more especially at the hour of *Death*. Whatever are our tossings by Divine Providence here, it will afford abundant consolation in all ups and downs by *Prosperity* and *Adversity*, in sickness and health, that we have made conscience of our former ways, and approved ourselves to God, in our Christian and Regular Conversations, both toward God, and toward our neighbour. And what a melancholy reflection will it be in our affliction; and when the angry or trying hand of God is upon us, to view the guilty *disorders* of our past lives, and see just ground for expecting worse things from the hands of so just a God as we have to deal with; And sure nothing can be more desirable and comfortable, then the *testimony of a good Conscience*, which is a *continual feast*, that we have *walked blamelessly in all manner of Conversation*, especially at the hour of *Death*; when that grim King of terrors looks us in the face. Psal. 97. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.* 2 Cor. 1. 12. *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* How unspeakably transporting must it be, when we come to a Dying Bed,

to look back, and see we have lived the Life of the *Righteous*, and have a well grounded hope, we shall *die the death* of the *Righteous*. Therefore if you would always keep a *good Conscience*, you must have a tender regard to the regulating your Lives according to Divine Rule. Thus you have considerable motives to engage you to a Regular Conversation.

The last thing in the *Application*, is an Use of CONSOLATION, and that in two or three brief particulars.

1. That tho' the *Lives* and *Conversations* of the *Best*, are not altogether free from Irregularities in this Life; yet God is pleased to accept of, and account them as *blameless* and *perfect* before him, in and through the blessed *Mediator*, the Lord *Jesus Christ*, who is our *Advocate with the Father*; and has undertaken to present Believers in him, and walkers with him, *without spot and wrinkle* before the Father, by virtue of that *atoning Righteousness*, which covers all our imperfections.

2. That whatever *imperfections*, and *irregularities* cleave to the Saints while here, they are hastening to a State of Life above, where they shall be *eternally free* from the least stain of Sin, or inclination to err or go astray; yea, delivered from all possibility of sinning or suffering, or being tempted to sin. *Here is joy unspeakable and full of Glory*. The Lord bless what you have heard, to whose Name be Glory and Praise for ever. *AMEN*.

FINIS.