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To
His worthy Friend
The Rev^d

Dr. Doddridge
at
Northampton

From
His most obedient
Humb^l Servant

Burlington (N^o)
March 15: 1749
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J. Belcher

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S E R M O N

Preach'd at *Burlington* in *New-Jersey*, *November 23.*
1749. Being the Day appointed by his Excellency
the G O V E R N O R, with the advice of His
Majesty's Council,

F O R A

Provincial THANKSGIVING.

Before the G O V E R N O R and others, upon Texts
chosen by his Excellency.

With a Prefatory Address to PHILIP DODDRI~~D~~GE, D. D.

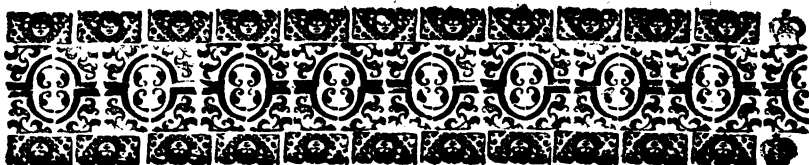
By GILBERT TENNENT, A. M. *lc*

Psalms cxvi. 12, 14. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his Benefits towards me? I will pay my Vows.*

Psalms l. 23. *Whofo offereth Praise, glorifyeth me: and to him that ordereth his Conversation aright, will I shew the Salvation of God.*

P H I L A D E L P H I A.

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T O

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D. D.

At Northampton, in England.

Reverend and honoured Sir,

THE worthy Character I have had of You from a Person of Eminence, in a neighbouring Province, from divers other worthy Persons, together with what I have seen of your writings, has excited my peculiar respect; in Testimony of which, I have taken the Freedom to present the following Discourse to You, which however defective in its Form, will not, I am persuaded, on account of its *Subject-Matter*, be disagreeable to a Gentleman of your distinguished Piety and Loyalty, nor in that respect unworthy of your Patronage.

SIR, I have with Pleasure heard of your Diligence and Success in conducting a Seminary of Learning, so as to serve the important Interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, in your native Country; and I doubt not the same generous Zeal for GOD, will incline and animate you to encourage with your Councils and Influence the

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like laudable Design in these Parts ; particularly in the Province of *New-Jersey*, where a Charter (of a Plan truly Catholick) is already obtain'd for an Academy, and where there is great Necessity of one, to qualify Persons for the Service both of Church and State. I heartily wish that the Smiles of Heaven may constantly attend your abundant Labours for God and his People, and that you may shine brighter and brighter to the perfect Day.

I am,

Reverend and honoured Sir,

with great respect, Your

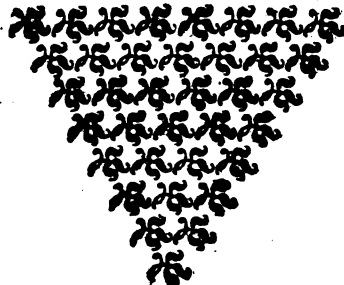
affectionate Friend

and humble Servant,

G. TENNENT.

Philadelphia, Novemb,

27. 1749.





PSALM lkv. 1. and PHILIP. i. 27.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion; and unto thee shall the Vow be performed.

Only let your Conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of CHRIST.



HE Design of the *Psalms* from whence our Text is taken, seems to be to declare the marvelous Works of Divine Grace towards the Church in Particular, and the Kindnesses of Divine Providence towards the World in General, and to excite the Professors of Religion, to give to GOD that Praise and Honour that is due for them. It is probable from the five last Verses of this *Psalms*, that it was pen'd on Occasion of a refreshing Rain, obtain'd after extream Drought.

Praise waiteth for thee, O GOD, in Zion: Waits for thine Acceptance. *Praise is Silent unto thee*, so some explain the original Word: Intimating that the Works of GOD are so Great and Glorious that his just Honour for them cannot be sufficiently express'd. The most accurate and exalted Praise, that the Church militant can offer, is compar'd with what it should be but Silence. Praise indeed is due to GOD from all the World, but it only waits for him in *Zion*, in his visible Church and Kingdom. It is true all his Works Praise him objectively, or minister Matter for Praise, but it is his Saints only who bless him by actual Adoration: In *Zion* was God's dwelling

dwelling Place, happy they who dwell with him there, they will be still praising him : *Unto thee shall the Vow be performed*, i. e. Promises made in the Day of Trouble, should be carried into Execution, after deliverance from it : Our Thanksgiving for Mercies received, is not like to be accepted, unless the Vows made in pursuit of them be perform'd,

FROM the Words thus explain'd, I would observe the following Proposition, *viz.*

THAT it is the Duty of GOD's professing People, to Praise or Thank him publickly for Benefits receiv'd, and to evidence the Sincerity thereof by the Performance of their Vows, or by a Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST.

IN Discourſing upon which I ſhall endeavour,

I. *TO open the Nature of Praise or Thankſgiving.*

II. *SPEAK of the Reasons of it.*

PRAISE and *Thankſgiving* in ſtrictneſs of Speech, have a different *Signification*. Praise is an Act of Devotion, by which we admire and confeſs his Divine Perfections ; but Thankſgiving only imports a grateful Senſe and humble Acknowledgement of paſt Mercies. We Praise GOD for all his glorious Acts, whether they reſpect ourſelves or others, yea, even for the terrible Diſplays of his Juſtice and Vengeance : But we Thank him only for the Inſtances of his Goodneſs, in which we ourſelves are ſome Way concern'd ; but ſeeing the ſacred Scriptures ſpeak of them promiſcuouſly, ſo may we, and the rather becauſe when *Praise* reſpects Benefits received, as it does in our Text, it is the ſame with *Thankſgiving*.

NOW the proper *Object* of *Praise* and *Thankſgiving*, is the bleſſed GOD, *Praise waiteth for thee, O GOD, in Zion*: Altho' we ſhould expreſs Gratitude for Benefits

fits received, to our fellow Creatures, who have been Instrumental in the Conveyance of them, yet seeing it is GOD who directs, assists, and succeeds them in their Attempts, without which all their Contrivances and Labours would prove abortive, therefore to him we must ascribe the Glory of all the Benefits we receive. *Enter his Gates with Thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise, be thankful unto him, and bless his Name; saith the Psalmist, for the Lord is GOD, his Mercy is everlasting, and his Truth endureth to all Generations: He is not only good essentially, but good communicatively; he is both good in himself, and good to us, from him every perfect Gift and good Donation comes, from his unexhausted Treasures all the good we possess is derived.*

THE *extent* of *Thanksgiving*, or that which we should be thankful for is all Things, *in every Thing give Thanks, Mercies temporal, spiritual, eternal, such as Creation, Providence, Redemption demand our Praise, make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye Lands, serve the LORD with gladness, come before his Presence with singing, know ye that the LORD is GOD, be it is that hath made us, and not we ourselves, it is GOD that girdeth us with Strength, and maketh our way Perfect, yea, that hath wash'd us from our Sins in his Blood.* And no doubt we should be Thankful even for Afflictions, that they have not been so great as we have deserv'd, in respect of Number, Weight, or Continuance. *Ezra. ix. 13, 14. And after all that is come upon us, for our evil Deeds, and for our great Trespas, seeing that thou our GOD, hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, should we again break thy Commandments.*

THE *Subjects* of *Thanksgiving*, are all Men in general, and those that are Pious in particular, such having receiv'd peculiar Benefits, are under greater engage-

ments to gratitude, and more inclin'd to perform them: Seeing that to them more has been given, consequently of them more is expected; whoever neglect the Duty of Praise, they should not, *Praise waiteth for thee, O GOD in Zion.* A Saint that neglects Praise Acts out of Character.

FARTHER, the *nature of Praise and Thanksgiving*; implies or includes, these Particulars following, *viz.*

1st. OUR firm persuasion of GOD's Government over all Events, by his Providence; in which respect we are told, that *the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong*; and that all the *Hairs of our Heads are numbered*; for without this Perswasion we shall not be inclin'd to give to GOD the Glory of his Goodness, but Sacrifice to our own net, and burn Incense to our own dreg. The providential Kingdom of GOD, my Brethren, manages the Globe, rules the Heavens, the Earth and Sea, with all the various Tribes of Inhabitants they contain, and that in every of their Motions, and Actions, the *Heaven is his Throne and the Earth his Foot-stool*: All the Principalities of the former, and Potentates of the latter, are Subject to his all governing Regimen: The angry Element in its greatest Rage and Up-roar, speedily stoops to his providential check, and sinks its threatening Surges in Calm and Silence. Yea, the very Devils in the Vault of Hell, are bound by his Power in Chains of Darkness, and feel the Penalties of his righteous Government: The smallest Beings he has form'd do not escape his all pervading Notice: The Lilies wear his Livery, and the Sparrows fall not without his Order: He Guides by an unerring Hand the most fortuitous Motions and casual Events, so as to Answer his wise Designs, with the utmost exactness: Tho' the Lot be cast into the Lap, yet the disposing

of it is of **GOD**. The Arrows apparently random Motion, pierc'd between the Joints of *Ababs* Harness; and hence is that necessary and reasonable Caution, that he *who girdeth on his Harness should not boast as he that putteth it of*, because Enterprizes sometimes have not that issue which they promise or threaten, but such as **GOD** is pleased to order.

THE Almighty rules both the End and the Means leading to it: When he proposes to favour his People with Plenty, he often succeeds the Means in such a Manner, as that his Hand may be plainly discerned. *Hosea. ii. 21, 22. And it shall come to pass in that Day, I will bear saith the LORD, I will bear the Heavens, and they shall bear the Earth, and the Earth shall bear the Corn and Wine and Oyl, and they shall bear Jezre. l.*

NOR are Things necessary Natural and Voluntary excluded, the vast the all comprehending Compass of his Providence, No, the Almighty gives Law to the revolving Seasons of the Year, the Ebbings and Flowings of the Sea, the Motions of the Heavens and Eclipses of the Luminaries, and obliges them by his Providence to conform to it; the Thunder and Lightning, the Wind and Rain, obey his Word; and as to intelligent Agents he turns them, but consistent with the natural Liberty of their Wills, as the Streams of Waters in the South: So that *tho' there be many Devices in Man's Heart, the Council of the LORD that shall stand*. He often brings Light out of Darkness and Order out of Confusion, so that those Things that are seemingly contrary to the good of his People, are in the End turn'd to their Advantage, and made Means to promote it, as is evident in the memorable Instance of *Joseph's* Advancement to the Government of *Egypt*.

2dly. *PRAISE* and *Thanksgiving*, implies or includes our particular Notice and high Esteem of **GOD's** merciful

ful dealings with us in his Providence, his Ways are Wonderful, fought out of all that have Pleasure therein. We have certainly great cause to admire the Mercies of GOD towards us, when we consider their Nature, Number, Seasonableness and Manner of Conveyance, together with our utter Unworthiness of the least of them!

3dly. *PRAISE* or *Thanksgiving* includes our affectionate love to GOD for Mercies we have received. The *Psalmist* assures us, *that he loved the LORD because he heard his Supplication*. The Almighty should be loved ardently by us, not only because of his essential, but his communicative Goodness; every new Mercy should add new fuel to the Fire of our Love.

4thly. *THE* aforesaid Duty includes, our making express mention of the Goodness of GOD towards us, not only in private but in publick, with Humility and Reverence, with Ardour and Sincerity, with Faith in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, the unfailing Source and instituted Medium of our Benefits, by whom they are convey'd to us, in whom they are rendered Salutary, and thro' whose meritorious Sacrifice our grateful returns for them do only find Acceptance: Nor should our Thanksgiving be destitute of Hope in the Mercy of a gracious GOD, for in such he delights. We should freely acknowledge, as we have great Reason, our utter unworthiness of the Benefits we receive, as well as the amiable Displays of Divine Wisdom, Power and Kindness apparent in them, entirely disclaiming a fordid Sacrifice to ourselves! Again,

5thly. *PRAISE* and *Thanksgiving* particularly and eminently includes, the *Payment of our Vows*, or in other Words, *a Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST*. Those who sincerely thank GOD for his Mercies, are led by a View of his Goodness to repent of their Sins,

against

against the Obligations of it, and to perform the Vows they made, either in the Day of their Trouble, in quest of needed Benefits, or in the Day of their Deliverance, in gratitude for them: For certainly it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay, without this all our verbal Praises, are but as a sounding Brass, and tinkling Simbal, insignificant and unacceptable: We must not only admire GOD in all we have, but improve all to his Glory, and walk before him in all well pleasing. (1 Chron. xxvii. 10, 11, 12, 13.) *Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the Congregation, and said blessed be thou O Lord GOD of Israel, our Father for ever and ever, thine O LORD is the Greatness and the Power, and the Glory, and the Majesty, for all that is in the Heaven, and the Earth is thine, thine is the Kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as Head above all, both Riches and Honour comes of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine Hand is Power and might, now therefore our GOD we thank thee, and Praise thy glorious Name.* See also 2 Tim. i. 3. *I thank GOD whom I serve from my Fathers with a pure Conscience; serving GOD, or a Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST, is real Praise, the best expression and most substantial Evidence of our Thank-giving.*

BUT what is the Gospel of CHRIST, and what is it to have a Conversation becoming it?

I Answer, that the Word Gospel, *εὐαγγέλιον* literally and strictly signifies glad Tydings, or the comfortable Promises and tenders of Salvation by our Lord JESUS CHRIST, but more largely considered, it includes the whole System of doctrines, precepts, promises and threatnings, contain'd in the Revelation of GOD's Will in his Word, respecting the Way to Salvation, by a Redeemer: And especially in the *New-Testament*. Con-

versation, doubtless signifies the general Course of our Conduct. A Man who only Steps into a Road now and then, cannot be said to walk in it; the Word *πολιτεία* signifies Citizenship, and is borrow'd from Citizens who live according to the Laws of their particular City, as *Grotius* observes, and therefore by a *Greek* Custom of Speech, it signifies our Manner of Life, and emphatically intends, that the whole of it be conform'd to the Gospel as becomes the true Citizens of Heaven.

THE original Word *ἀξίως* translated *becoming* in our Text, is elsewhere translated *Worthy*, as *Ephes. iv. 1.* and *Thef. i. 11.* Which supposes not a worth of Desert, preceeding the Grace of GOD, but a worth of suitability or fitness consequent upon it, as the aforesaid Scriptures sufficiently confirm. The Word signifies something suitable, decent, ornamental: Those actions are worthy any Agent, that are suitable to his Place and Station, that become his Character; and add a distinguishing Lustre to it. And hence the Apostle to the *Ephesians* forbids foolish Jestings as not convenient, that is not suitable to our Profession of Christianity: And our LORD exhorts his Disciples *to let their Light so shine before Men, that they seeing their good Works, may glorify their Father which is in Heaven.* Christians are like Stars in the Night of this dark World, whose light is design'd to direct wandering Transgressors into the paths of Peace and Purity, which issue in Salvation.

NOW our Conversation may be said to be becoming the Gospel of CHRIST.

1st. WHEN it answers our Profession of the Gospel, when we are in some Measure what we seem to be, and what by our Profession of the Gospel of CHRIST we oblige ourselves to be; When we who Name the Name of CHRIST depart from Iniquity, deny ourselves, take up the Redeemer's Cross and follow him. And,

2dly. When it is agreeable to the Doctrines of the Gospel; when we live as those who believe that CHRIST is the Son of GOD and Man, that he died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification, and that he will come at last in his own and in his Father's Glory, to judge the Quick and Dead, according to their Works, to consign the Righteous to mansions of inexpressible and endless Blessedness, and banish the Wicked from his Presence, into unconceivable and endless Destruction!

3dly. WHEN our lives are conform'd to the Precepts of the Gospel, which recommends the whole moral Law to our observance, and enjoins us to be Holy in all manner of Conversation, in thought, affection, word and action, teaching to deny all ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to walk righteously, soberly, and godly in this present World. The Gospel likewise commands us in particular, to be humble, heavenly, loving to all, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated; contented with our Lot, and resign'd to our father's Will, be clothed with Humility, set your Affections on the Things above, walk in Love, and having Food and Raiment be therewith content.

4thly. OUR Conversation may be said to be *becoming the Gospel of CHRIST*, when it is suitable to the Promises of it, and our Expectations from them; when we live as those that expect the continued Pardon of our Sins, the compleat Sanctification of our Natures, peace with GOD, joy in the HOLY GHOST, and in a Word, every needful blessing here, and eternal blessedness hereafter; in beholding GOD without any Medium, in perfect conformity to him, and in the full and perpetual enjoyment of him: In particular when we habitually lean upon the Promises by Faith, to obtain Direction and Strength, to perform with Diligence the Duties requir'd

requir'd of us, and to sustain with Patience, the Difficulties laid upon us; as well as for Acceptance in both: And when in Hope of the good promised, we rejoyce in all the Changes and Calamities of Life, and *in Patience do possess our Souls*; when hereby we are influenc'd to *cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, and perfect Holiness, in the fear of GOD*. The Promises of the Gospel, my Brethren, are many in Number, exactly suited to all the Difficulties of the present Life, and they are sure in Performance *for he is faithful that promised*, and cannot fail the Soul that Trusts in him. The Promises are likewise great and precious in their kind, comprizing the best Blessings of both Worlds.

5thly. OUR Conversation may be said to *be becoming the Gospel of CHRIST*, when it is suitable to the threatnings thereof; that is, when they so far influence our Minds, as to make us affraid to offend GOD; tho' a slavish Dread of the Almighty does not become a Child of his, yet a fear of Reverence and Caution does, and hence threatnings are frequently propounded in the Scriptures to believers, as well as others, with Design to affect their fear. See *Heb. xii. 28. 29. Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom that cannot be mov'd, let us have Grace*, i. e. let us Labour for the exercise of it, whereby we may serve GOD with reverence and godly fear; and that for this Reason, *because GOD is a consuming Fire*: And *Luke xii. 5. We are Comanded to fear him who after he hath kill'd, hath Power to cast into Hell*, yea, saith our Saviour, *I say unto you fear him*: And elsewhere, we are commanded not only to begin, but *to work out the Work of our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*. Nor does this make our sacred Service criminally Legal, if in the mean Time it has a supream respect to the commanding authority of GOD, and principally flows from Love to him,

him, and faith in the Mediator : And our fear only inspires us with a reverence of GOD, and restrains us from sinning against him ; to this Purpose undoubtedly the threatnings are propos'd to pious Persons. *Rom. viii. 13. If ye live after the Flesh ye shall die, but if ye thro' the Spirit mortify the Deeds of the Body ye shall live.* It is the peculiar Glory of Christianity, that its Arguments to enforce Obedience, are adapted to all the Faculties of a human Soul, and serve to influence and animate all its Springs of Actions ; they not only allure our Love and Hope, but alarm our fear and aversion : There is likewise a beautiful Harmony and Contemporation, among all the Graces of the Holy Spirit : *e. g.* Fear qualifies Joy, and makes it reverent, and Joy qualifies Fear and makes it pleasant ; and hence we are bid to *rejoyce with Trembling*. Love without Fear in our present State especially, wou'd become secure, and Fear without Love would become slavish ; nor does there appear less consistency between Fear and Hope, if either the Author or Nature of the Reward hop'd for, be considered, or the Qualifications necessary to the Profession of it : It is likewise observable that as Faith excites fear, so Fear confirms Faith. It was *Noah's* Faith in the Divine threatning, that mov'd his fear, and his fear his Diligence in preparing an Ark to the saving of his House ; as the Author to the *Hebrews*, informs us. Nor are these Words of the *Psalmist* less memorable, *Pf. lxxiv. 9, 10. All Men shall fear, the Righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and trust in him.* As there is a Circulation of Causes in Nature, so in Grace. The Vapours that ascend from the Earth, cause Clouds, which descend in Showers and these again cause Vapours. So the more we believe GOD's threatnings, the more we shall fear them, and the more we fear them, the more we believe them. But
instead

instead of the aforesaid Harmony, there is the greatest Confusion and Discord in error and impiety, one Doctrine Contradicts the other, and one Lust crosses the other, *e. g.* Covetousness and Prodigality, urge contrary Demands. Once more,

6thly. Our Conversation may be said to be becoming *the Gospel of CHRIST*, when we imitate in our Lives the good Examples therein mentioned, which is doubtless the great Design of their being kept on Record; and hence we are enjoyn'd to take our Brethren the Prophets for an Example of Suffering, Affliction and of Patience, whose Faith we shou'd follow, considering the End of their Conversation: *Seeing we are compass'd about with such a Cloud of Witnesses, let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, and especially the Example of the blessed GOD, and of his Son our Lord JESUS CHRIST, should be imitated by us; and hence we are Commanded to be followers of GOD as dear Children, and to walk in Love. The Redeemer has likewise left us an Example, that we should follow his Steps, and learn of him to be meek and lowly. But it is Time to consider the,

SECOND General Head of Discourse, which was to speak of the Reasons of this Duty of Praise or Thanksgiving. Now they are principally these, *viz.* The Command of GOD, our own Comfort, and Interest.

IN every Thing give Thanks, saith the Apostle, for this is the will of GOD in CHRIST, concerning you. 1 Thes. v. 18. Has not the Almighty a Right to demand our Homage in point of Justice, as our Creator, and in point of Gratitude, as our Benefactor? And do not his essential and incommunicable Excellencies confirm his infinite Right of Sovereignty over us, and oblige us to obedience?

ence? But why is *Thanksgiving* term'd the *will of GOD* in CHRIST JESUS? I Answer, because it is illustrated and recommended under the Gospel Dispensation, by CHRIST's Authority and Example. The Tidings of the Redeemer's Birth were usher'd into the World; by the grateful Songs of Angels and Men, the lofty Cherubs and humble Shepherds; chearfully join'd in Confort in a Song of Praise, saying *glory to GOD on high, on Earth, Peace and good will towards Men.* And our Lord himself frequently and fervently thank'd his Father, and reprov'd the Lepers for their unthankfulness. It was meet my Brethren that this Duty shou'd be urg'd under the Gospel Dispensation, seeing it argues so just, so ingenuous and so noble a Temper of Mind; seeing that all that we have and are spring from the meer Bounty and Goodness of GOD, it is but reasonable, he shou'd have a Tribute of Honour for them, seeing that of him as a creating Cause, and thro' him as a governing Cause are all Things, they should be directed to him as a final Cause, and those that are truly Gracious having obtain'd special Mercies, are consequently under special Engagements to the Duty of Thanksgiving.

BUT it adds Weight to the Argument of divine Authority, when it is considered, that our Comfort is concerned in the Duty enjoined by it, and thus it is in the present Case: *Praise the LORD for it is pleasant,* saith the *Psalmist.* *Pf. cxlvii. 1.* How can this Duty be otherwise than pleasant, seeing it pursues the natural bent of pious and grateful Minds, and proceeds from Love the fountain of Pleasure, as well as gives vent to those tender Sentiments which wou'd Create uneasiness if confin'd; not to say that by reviving the Memory of past Mercies, it gives, in some Degree, a repeated enjoyment of them, and so tends to calm the Soul, and in-

pire the Mind, with Sweetness and Serenity : What is Praise but the free and strong Sallies of a Soul captivated and endear'd by kindness towards its beloved Object? Had we a vigorous Relish of the Divine Goodness, it wou'd so inflame our Love, and animate our Gratitude, that the pleasure of Praise wou'd be to us a Heaven upon Earth : Surely Praising GOD is the End for which we were Born, the Heaven to which we are design'd.

NOR is our Benefit less promoted by the Duty of Praise, then our Comfort : *Praise the LORD for it is Good.* Not only Good and Excellent in itself, but good to us : It assists the Performance of other Duties by encreasing our Love, and encouraging our Hope, which are the springs of Obedience ; but how does it do this ? I answer, by recollecting past Mercies, which are both incentives to Love and Hope, and by a consciousness of our endeavouring to make grateful Returns for them. Farther, Thanksgiving by dwelling upon the nature and circumstances of Benefits receiv'd, tends to heighten our Esteem of their Value, and so to make us contented with our Lot, which is an important Priviledge.

WHAT has been said, serves to reprove several sorts of People, particularly such who never think of the Author of their Mercies : It is said of the Wicked, *that GOD is not in all their tho'ts.* *Pf. x.* They resemble the Swine who devour whatever Fruit they meet with, but look not up to see from whence it came. And likewise such who ascribe the Honour of their Mercies to their own Ingenuity and Industry, and thus as ungratefully as impiously and foolishly sacrifice to their own Net. The Words of *Moses* to the *Israelites*, *Deut. viii.* are remarkable upon this Head, *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Cammandments, least when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built*
goddly

goodly Houses, and dwell therein; and when thy Herds and thy Flocks multiply, and thy Silver and Gold is multiplied, then thine Heart be lifted up, and thou forgettest the Lord thy God which brought thee from the House of Bondage thro' a terrible Wilderness, that he might humble and prove thee, and do thee good at thy latter End; and thou say in thy Heart, my Power, and the might of my Hand hath gotten me this Wealth: But thou shalt remember the Lord thy GOD, for it is he that giveth thee Power to get Wealth. But if thou do forget the Lord thy God, I testify against you this Day, that ye shall surely perish.---

Nor should those pass without Censure, who either praise God with their Lips only, while their Hearts are far from him; or neglect to crown their Thanksgivings with a Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST; in both which Instances, verbal Praise is unacceptable to that God who is a Spirit, and of no avail: To such, and only to such, who worship God in Spirit and in Truth, and order their Conversation aright, will be shewn the Salvation of God.

LET us therefore be entreated, my Fathers and Brethren, to comply with the Design of this Day, in performing the Duty of *Thanksgiving* in the Manner before represented. This is certainly the way to please God, and perpetuate our Mercies and Deliverances. Psal. lxxv. 30, 31. *I will praise the Name of the Lord with a Song, and will magnify him with Thanksgiving; this also shall please the Lord better than an Ox or Bullock that hath Horns or Hoofs: The humble shall see it and be glad, and your Hearts shall live that seek the Lord.* This Method, Sirs, is certainly the surest safest way to increase the Number of our Mercies; the more thankful we are for the Mercies we possess, the greater Reason we have to expect more: Surely that GOD who is

Goodness itself, will rejoice over such to do them good. Praise is certainly one of the most disinterested Duties in the whole circle of Religion. Prayer implores a supply of our Wants, Faith applies a Balsam to our Wounds, and Hope expects a future Good; but Praise only Proposes to itself to do as becomes a rational Creature, to the best and most Beneficent of Beings. It is therefore the most excellent Part of our religious Worship, the employ, and delight of the Inhabitants of Heaven; then let us as the *Psalmist* expresses it, *offer unto GOD Thanksgiving, and pay our Vows unto the most High.* Unto that GOD who has made us by his Power, preserv'd us by his Providence, and redeem'd us by his Love. If then there be any Force in creating Goodness, if any Bonds in his forbearing Patience, if any endearments in his redeeming Kindness, if any Obligations in the Hope of our high calling, we should make thankful Returns to him from whom we have receiv'd, and from whom we expect such invaluable Benefits. The light of Nature, my Brethren, dictates the Necessity of Gratitude; the Publicans practiz'd it as our LORD assures us, the benighted Pagans felt its Force, witness *Lycurgus*, who declared its contrary monstrous. Yea, the very Beasts express a kind of Gratitude to their Benefactors. *The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib.* If we therefore who profess Christianity, sordidly neglect it, we sink below Publicans, Pagans, and Beasts, who all conspire to reproach our stupid and ungrateful Conduct, at which the Heavens and Earth may be astonish'd.

BUT in particular we should at this Time, praise and thank GOD, especially for the Preservation of the Life of our most gracious King GEORGE the Second, and the rest of the Royal Family, and to this we may be excited, by considering the Mildness and Equity of his Government, from the beginning of his Reign, to

present Time: He has expressed a just and tender Regard to the Rights and Liberties of his Subjects, nor has he stretch'd his Prerogative, to the prejudice of those wholesome Laws whereby it is reasonably limited, and his People's properties secur'd. He has Imprison'd none against Law, granted no Monopolys to the injury of Trade, collected no Ship-Money, rob'd none of their religious Liberties, rais'd no Subsidies without authority of Parliament, all which together with other Evils now too tedious to enumerate, were flagrant in the tyrannical Reigns of the *Steward-Family*; whose violent Attachment to *Popery*, and arbitrary Power (for the most Part) made the oppress'd Nations groan, and their illegal Government a Scourge to the Protestants in general, and a Curse to GREAT-BRITAIN in Particular. To their indolent, and unaccountable Conduct, my Brethren! we may justly ascribe the Ruin of the *French* and *Bohemian* Churches! as well as the great growth of the *French* Power! Which is now become so formidable to all *Europe*: Events which Demand the Tears, and Groans of all true and real Protestants, as well as the Methods by which they have been brought to pass, their extream Abhorance and Indignation! *Quis talia fando temperet a lacrimis!*

BUT since King WILLIAM; of glorious Memory, gallantly undertook the Protection of our Religion, and became the Patron of our Laws, both which were equally laden with intolerable Pressures and unjust Investives, and since under the peculiar and surprizing Smiles of a gracious Providence, which enjoined the Winds to assist and accelerate the wish'd for access of his naval Armament, in the critical happy Minute, and to the most convenient Retreat for landing in the whole Kingdom; while in the mean Time, the British Flag unhappily engag'd

engag'd against its true Interest was beat back with adverse Gust and forbid to intercept our Deliverance: I say since that brave *Prince of Nassau* has under GOD, by the Piety of his Conduct, the Prudence of his Councils and the Valour of his Arms, sav'd the oppress'd *British* Nation, from a terrible Inundation of *Popery*, and Slavery, and guarded the Throne from a *Romish* race, in all succeeding Times, what an amiable and amazing Change has there been in the Administration of the Government? On which Account there is surely a just Foundation to turn our Complaints into Praises, our Sorrows into Songs, our Groans into Gladness, and our Tears into Triumphs! Our invaluable Priviledges, both Civil and Sacred, are inviolably secur'd, the Importance of which who can express? If Life itself be a Priviledge, certainly Liberty, both civil and religious must needs be so likewise; without which it cannot be agreeably enjoy'd: Love of Liberty is as strong in human Nature as the love of Life, nay in great and generous Minds much stronger; and hence brave Patriots have run the most formidable Risques, and endur'd the greatest Fatigues to obtain and secure it, against the Attempts of Tyranny and Violence: Yea, they have gloriously chose to loose their Lives, rather than to be basely bereav'd of it, nor can we hear of the hazardous but noble Efforts of such magnanimous Hero's, without Sentiments of respect and complacence, this is the general Sense of Mankind. Liberty is the Birth-right of all, which they hold by the same Tenure they do their Lives.

BUT religious Liberty is still of greater Moment then civil, the most sacred and important of all Rights: Inasmuch as it directly affects the Soul and Conscience. O what a singular Mercy, then is it, that we enjoy this at present in its amiable and utmost extent, that we

have

have the sacred Scriptures put into our Hands, and may worship GOD according to the Dictates of our Consciences, and profess our religious Sentiments in every Thing that does not affect the Peace of Society, without any Molestation, without any to make us afraid, of ruining Fines, loathsome Dungeons, unjust Banishment into a Foreign uncultivated Soil, or any other Engines of Cruelty and Death which were the favourite Schemes of former Reigns, to propogate their Religion, or rather, the Executioners of their religious Rage! against the Objects of their criminal Resentment, and the melancholy but honourable fate, of some of our forefathers, whose sincere and steady Piety and manly Courage wou'd not suffer them to truckle to the slavish Yoke of arbitrary Power!

NOW inasmuch as the Lives of our gracious Sovereign and his Family are under GOD, the Securities of the aforesaid Priviledges, we have abundant Reason to praise JEHOVAH for their Preservation, with the utmost Alacrity and affectionate Gratitude! What Words are big enough to express, or Colours strong enough to paint the Importance and Moment of that comprehensive and durable Blessing, which King WILLIAM the Third, brought to the Protestant Churches in general, and to the *British* Nations in particular, by being (instrumentally) the Father and Founder of the present Happy and serene Succession in the illustrious House of *Hanover*, which (humanly speaking) is the principal Barrier of our Liberties, the Pillar of our Hopes, and Source of our Joys, as well as the Terror and Envy of our Enemies.

AND altho' the late Peace was not attended with all the Advantages we could wish, yet in the mean Time it is a Mercy considering the superior Number and Force

of our Enemies together with the secrecy and firmness of their Councils, that our Affairs are not in a worse Situation than they are : Peace consider'd absolutely, is doubtless an amiable Blessing. How desirable is it to be deliver'd from a foreign War, attended with great expence of Blood and Treasure, and much more from intestine Divisions, and rebellious Confederacies, which are still more perilous and fatal? And if we consider the late Peace relatively, may it not be said that these consequents of it, afford matter of Thankfulness, namely the Preservation of *Holland*, our natural Ally, from utter Ruin, by the fury of *France*, and putting it in a better Situation for defence than before the War began, by raising its Statholder to his former Dignity and Authority. The Preservation of *Holland*, is of great Importance to us, because that in it our own is in a great Measure involv'd, as well as the safety of the Protestant Interest in general. It is likewise Matter of Thankfulness, my Brethren, that our Liberties both civil and religious are continued: The Almighty GOD for our innumerable impieties might have in Justice given us up into the Hands of our Enemies, and depriv'd us of all our Priviledges at a stroke, and truly in the Course of the late War, especially at the Battle of *Culloden*, they were on the very verge of Ruin! And may it not be hop'd that the prudent Project of the Government in planting a new Colony in *Nova-Scotia*, will in some Measure, ballance the loss of *Cape-Breton*, and in some degree, antidote the unhappy Consequences of the Surrender of it, by screening Part of the Frontiers of this *British* Continent, from the Ravages and Insults, of the *French* and *Indians*, and by enlarging and securing that important Article of Trade, the Fishery, as well as by supplying Places that need with the other substantial

Necessaries

Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life, which as we are inform'd may be easily rais'd in that fertile Soil. Let us therefore Praise that gracious GOD, who has punish'd us less then our Iniquities deserve, and in the midst of just wrath remembred Mercy, who has set bounds to the Ambition of proud Oppressors, and said to them, as to the threatening Surges of the enrag'd Ocean, *Thus far ye shall come and no farther*: There shall your proud Waves we stay'd. It is he that stilleth the Noise of the Seas, the Noise of their Waves, and the Tumult of the People. It is he that maketh War to cease to the Ends of the Earth, who breaks the Bow and cuts the Spear asunder; had not he been upon our Side, surely our Enemies had swallowed us up.

NOR should the plentiful supply of Rain, after a fore distressing Drought, wherewith this and the neighbouring Provinces, were not long since visited, seasonably sent in Answer to the Prayers of its Inhabitants, be ungratefully overlook'd in our Thanksgivings. Upon this Account the *Psalmist* excites us to praise GOD, in very affectionate and beautiful Language, in the *clxvii. Psalm 7, 8, and 9. Verses.* Sing unto the LORD with Thanksgiving, sing Praise upon the Harp to our GOD, who covereth the Heaven with Clouds, who prepareth Rain for the Earth, who maketh Grass to grow upon the Mountains! He giveth to the Beasts his Food, and to the young Ravens which cry. If the Heavens were as Brass, the Earth wou'd soon be as Iron, and refuse to produce sustenance for Man and Beast: It is the Almighty that sendeth Rain upon the Earth, he hath made a Decree for it, and begets the drops of the Dew: And hence we are bid to fear the LORD, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, that giveth Rain, both the former and latter Rain in his Season, and reserveth the appointed Weeks of the Harvest.

Jer. v. 24. When his People Sin against him he threatens to withhold the Rain, and make it Powder and Dust. *Deut. xxviii.*

“NOW do not the immerited Instances of divine Goodness in the smiles of Providence, upon the former and latter Harvest in this part of the Land, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness, call aloud for our publick, humble and grateful Acknowledgements to the GOD of all our Mercies.” The remembrance of the late scarcity of Bread, we groan’d under in these Provinces, may justly accent our grateful Thanksgiving for the present Plenty we enjoy, considering how justly the righteous GOD might have punished our *Jeshurun-like* abuse of his Goodness, by breaking the staff of our Bread entirely, and sending among us cleanness of Teeth. And considering how often he has done so by others, perhaps not more Criminal and Ungrateful than ourselves; shall we not then praise and thank that GOD who maketh Peace in our Borders, and filleth us with the finest of the Wheat? Who visiteth the Earth, Watereth and greatly enricheth it with the River of GOD; thou, saith the *Psalmist*, in the Psalm from whence my Text is taken; *preparest them Corn, when thou hast provided for it, thou makest it soft with Showers, thou blessest the Springing thereof, thou crownest the Tear with thy Goodness, and thy Paths drop Fatness, they drop upon the Wilderness, and the little Hills rejoyce on every Side, the Pastures are cloth’d with Flocks, the Vallies are also cover’d with Corn, they shout for Joy, they also Sing.*

TO our Thanksgiving let us add humble and hearty Supplications, that the Mercies we enjoy, may be continued, and every other we need conferr’d; in particular let us Pray, as it is piously and excellently express’d in the Governor’s Proclamation. “That the Kingdom

“ of

“ of the Lord JESUS CHRIST may be advanced
 “ in the World, and that his blessed Gospel may
 “ run, and be glorify'd among all Nations, and in
 “ particular among the original Natives, of this
 “ Land, and for all in authority over us, particularly
 “ that the best of Blessings may descend on our
 “ gracious Sovereign King GEORGE, the Prince and
 “ Princess of *Wales*, the *Duke*, the Princesses, the royal
 “ Issue, and on every Branch of that illustrious Fa-
 “ mily; that the Protestant Succession may abide before
 “ GOD forever, that this Province may be ever re-
 “ membered of GOD for good, that he would merciful-
 “ ly heal our Divisions, restore Peace and Tranquility,
 “ humble us for our Sins, prevent the Judgments we
 “ deserve, that he would incline us to lead quiet and
 “ peaceable Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty, under
 “ the Government placed over us, that he would gra-
 “ ciously prevent the growth of Sin and Impiety, revive
 “ pure and undefiled Religion, and make us a People
 “ zealous of good Works.”

AND especially let us Crown the whole Solemnity,
 with a *Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST*, which
 is certainly the most honourable, safe, pleasant, and pro-
 fitable kind of Conduct: This reflects Honour upon the
 blessed GOD, upon ourselves, and upon the Gospel of
 the dear Redeemer; this tends to establish and enlarge
 his Kingdom among Men, by aluring and constraining
 Sinners to turn from the Folly of their Ways to the
 Wisdom of the Just: This introduces Peace and Content
 into our own Minds, and clears up our Evidences, for
 future Blessedness: For *Wisdoms ways are ways of
 Pleasantness, and all its Paths are Peace*. This is certainly
 the Design of the whole Word of GOD, and of all his
 Works of Creation, Redemption, and Providence. And
 this

this is undoubtedly the Scope of all the Duties and Ordinances of Religion, to this our Prayers and Practices tend, and without this all is vain! Give me leave to conclude this Discourse in the Words of the Apostle PAUL, to the Ephesians. *Finally Brethren, whatsoever Things are True, whatsoever Things are Honest, whatsoever Things are Just, whatsoever Things are Pure, whatsoever Things are Lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Vertue, if there be any Praise, think on these Things. Amen.*

F I N I S.



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