A Christian must have no saving grace wanting: 2 Pet i. 5, 'Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge,' &c. There is all the graces, and they must come out in their turn. We need faith and virtue, zeal and holiness; and knowledge to guide it, and patience to arm it against the troubles of the present life; and we need temperance to moderate our affections to our worldly enjoyments; and godliness, that we may be frequent in communion with God; and brotherly-kindness, that we may preserve peace among our brethren, and may not make fractions and ruptures in the church; and we need charity, that we may be useful to all that are about us. There is use and work for all graces, one time or other: sometimes we shall be tempted to a neglect of God, at other times we shall be tempted to make a breach upon brotherly-kindness, at other times there will be a breach of charity. Sometimes the devil seeks to tempt us to fleshly wickedness, therefore we need temperance; sometimes to spiritual wickedness, to error, therefore we need knowledge; sometimes to raging with despair, then we need faith. We need the whole armour of God, for Satan hath his various ways of battery and assault: sometimes through ignorance we miscarry and run into error; sometimes for want of faith we run into despair and discomfort; sometimes for want of temperance violent corrupt lusts overset the soul.

[2.] We must often pray to God for renewed influences; we must not only get habits of grace, but pray for a renewed influence. It is notable, next to the spiritual armour, the apostle mentioneth prayer: Eph. vi. 18, 'Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance' We never receive so much from God upon earth as to stand in need of no more. And therefore though you put on the whole armour of God, yet 'praying always with all supplication in the Spirit' Why? Because without the Lord's special assistance, whereby he actuates those graces, we can never defend ourselves nor offend the adversaries, or do any thing to purpose in the spiritual life. Strength of grace inherent will not bear us out against new assaults. Habitual grace it needs actual influence; partly, that these graces may be applied and excited to work: Phil. ii. 13, 'He giveth to will and to do' God giveth to do; that is, excites that strength you have, and carrieth it out to work; and then that it may be directed in work: 2 Thes. iii. 5, 'And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.' Every time we would make use of the helmet of salvation, when we would lift up the head and wait for the mercy of
God. The Lord direct you; we must be directed: and not only so, but that it may be supplied with new strength, for it is said, Isa. xl. 29, 'He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no power he increaseth strength.' And he doth continue it: Luke xxi. 32, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not' Thus will God keep us in dependence for those liberal aids and constant supplies of his grace, without which we cannot use the grace that we have.

[3.] You must resist: 1 Pet. v. 9, 'Whom resist, steadfast in the faith;' James iv. 7, 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you' Stand your ground, and then Satan falls.

In all those assaults, Satan hath only weapons offensive, as fiery darts; none defensive. We have not only the sword of the Spirit, which is an offensive weapon, but the shield of faith, that is a defensive piece of armour; therefore your safety lieth in resisting.

Now, this resistance must be:

(1.) Not faint and cold, but strong and vehement.

(2.) Thorough and total.

(3.) Constant and perpetual.

(1.) Not faint and cold. Some kind of resistance may be made by general and common grace. The light of nature will rise up in defiance of many sins, especially at first; but this must be earnest and vehement; it is against the enemies of your soul: Paul's resistance was with serious dislikes and deep groans: Rom. vii. 15, 24, 'The evil that I hate;' and 'wretched man! how shall I be delivered?' In most cases, a detestation or peremptory denial is enough. 'When the devil tempts Christ to worship him: Mat. iv. 10, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' In other cases, there must be serious disputes and repulses. When Eve speaks faintly and coldly, the devil renews his assaults with more violence: Gen. iii. 1-3, 'Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' She speaks there warmly, and with too impatient a resentment of the restraint, and too cold in the commination and threatening. Therefore the devil works upon her, when he saw she amplifieth the restraint; for she saith more indeed: 'We must neither eat nor touch it.' A faint denial is a kind of grant, and therefore your repulse to Satan must be vehement and strong. In many cases, slight Satan answer with indignation; as though a dog barks, yet the traveller goes by: Satan cannot endure contempt. At other times, argue for God strongly. Now, the great argument that quickens you to this lively and vehement resistance is, to consider thy soul is in danger, and all thy eternal concerns. So some explain that, Eph. vi. 12, 'We fight not against flesh
and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places; in 'heavenly places' it is in the original. No worldly concernments must go so near as that which concerns the eternal good and salvation of your souls. What would the devil have from thee but thy soul and thy precious enjoyments, thy peace of conscience, communion with God, thy hopes of eternal life? And when Satan comes, and bids nothing but worldly vanities, we should repel them with indignation. A merchant that hath a precious commodity, and a Chapman bids him a base price, he puts up his wares with indignation, and will not so much as regard him or hear him; so when the devil comes, and would cheat you of your precious enjoyments, you should repel him with indignation, when there is such base and unworthy trifles to come in competition with your great hopes: as Christ, Mat. xvi. 26, 'What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' What! shall I lose my soul, my hopes, and happiness and all for such paltry things, for a little temporal advantage?

(2.) It must be a thorough and total resistance: when you yield, the devil encroacheth upon you. We are bid, in the Canticles, to 'take the little foxes,' to dash Babylon's brats in pieces: we should not yield to Satan a little. The devil at first cannot hope to prevail for greater things, therefore he seems more modest in his temptations; ay, but lesser sticks set the greater on fire: when ye entertain lesser temptations, this kindles in your souls, and it is easily blown up into a great flame in your conscience. At first, when the devil came to our first parents, 'Hath God said?' and then, 'You shall not surely die.' 'Hath God said you shall not eat of the fruit of the garden?' The first temptation was more modest. The approaches of Satan to the soul are gradual he, asks but a little; ay, but it is a great matter if we grant it. Consider, the evil of temptation is better kept out than got out. The stone on the top of the hill, when it begins to roll downward, it is a hard thing to stay it; we cannot say how far it will go. Saith the deceived heart, I will yield but little, and never yield again. The devil will carry thee further and further, until he hath left no tenderness in thy conscience. As many that thought to venture but a shilling or two, yet, by the secret witchery of gaming, they play away their estate, clothes and all; so many that think they will sin but little at first, at last sin away all principles of conscience and profession of godliness.

(3.) It must not be temporary, for a while, but perpetual. It concerns us not only to stand out against the first assault of Satan, but a long siege. Satan, what he cannot gain by argument, seeks to procure by importunity. But 'resist him.' saith the apostle, 'steadfastly in the faith,' 1 Pet. v. 9. As his instrument spake to Joseph, 'from day to day,' she ceased not, Gen. xxxix. 10. Deformed objects, when accustomed to them, seem not so odious; so the devil hopes to prevail at last, at least temptation will not seem so odious. But you must keep your zeal to the last, as we rate away an importunate beggar that will not be answered: to yield at last is to lose the glory of the conflict. Grace must not only have its work, but 'its perfect work,' James i. 4; so let all our graces, temperance, godliness, and brotherly kindness, have their perfect work.
[4.] There is required watchfulness: 1 Pet. v. 8, 'Be sober, be vigilant.' You that are not ignorant of Satan's devices should watch that you give not him an advantage, 2 Cor. ii. 11; nor an occasion, 2 Cor. xi. 12, lest Satan tempt you; nor a pretence, Gal. v. 13, to the flesh. Certainly, he that would not be foiled needs a great deal of holy moderation, and constant jealousy over his heart; he had need to guard his senses: Ps. cxix. 37, 'Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity;' and to look to his company: Ps. cxix. 115, 'Depart from me, ye evil-doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God;' and to avoid all occasions of sin, not rush into them, but keep out of the way: Prov. iv. 14, 'Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men;' for this is to ride into the devil's quarters, to run into the mouth of danger. Heretofore these were wholesome instructions, and why should they not be so now? The devil is not less subtle, or sin less odious and dangerous; only we are more foolhardy, therefore stand not at such a distance as we should from occasions. It is easier to avoid the occasion than the sin when occasion is offered; as it is easier for a bird to fly from the snare than, when entangled, to avoid danger. Therefore, when you run into harm's way, you tempt Satan to tempt; and when you look not to yourselves, it is just with God to let you fall into the snare.

Secondly, There are special times of temptation, when Christians should look to themselves. There is an evil day: Eph. vi. 13, 'That ye may be able to stand in the evil 'day.' And there is an hour of temptation upon the world: Rev. iii. 10, 'I will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world.' There are certain times when God is proving what men will do, and when the devil is likely to make a great advantage of our discontents and afflictions, when things fall cross to our desires, and we know not what evil waits for us; how should we do to behave ourselves?

[1.] Be not over-confident' or over-diffident. Not over-confident, in running beyond the bounds of our calling, to cast ourselves into dangers and hazards of temptation. Nor over-diffident, by base flying from, or giving way when God calls for valiant resistance. Both ways is the devil likely to assault us; either by making us foolhardy. So Satan seeks to drive us beyond the bounds of our calling, to put us out of our place, that we may be a prey to him. As men use to trouble the water, that they may rouse the fish, and draw them into the snare, and drive them out of places of safety where they rest; so the devil seeks to put us out of our safety. Peter would needs come to Christ: Mat. xiv. 28, 'Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water;' and we see he sinks before he could accomplish his purpose. So when we are over-confident, and run out of our calling upon hazards, then we are ever and anon ready to sink. But we should not turn back when God calls us to a valiant resistance: 'Should such a man as I flee?' Neh. vi. 11. Observe Peter's dastardliness when he ventures without a call into the priest's hall; a question of the damsel's overturns him. He that was so cowardly when he was out of his way, look upon his boldness when he was in his work: Acts iv. 7 unto ver. 13, 'When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they marveled' John was the disciple of love, and Peter was the fearful disciple; yet
how full of boldness, courage, and zeal when they were called and singled out to
give proof of the reality of God's grace! And therefore we should never be over-
forward, nor over-backward, but own God in his truth when we are in our calling.
Let not Satan bring you out of your place to cast yourselves as a prey to him.

[2.] In an hour of temptation, we should be more solicitous about duties than
events, and about sins than dangers. As to events, God is concerned as well as
you, and he will order them for his own glory. It should be your great care that
you may be kept blameless to his heavenly kingdom: 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18, 'The Lord,
that hath delivered me out of the mouth of the lion, shall deliver me from every
evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.' However God deal
with you as to events, and whatever dangers attend you, this should be your care
mainly, that you may not sin, but be kept blameless. David often begged
direction, that he might be guided in his trouble, and not falter, and do anything
unseemly.

[3.] Be more jealous of Satan's wiles than of his open assaults. Natural courage,
and the bravery of a common and ordinary resolution, together with deep
engagement of credit and interest, may do much to make us stand out against
assaults, against open force and violence of evil men; but there needs a great
deal of judgment to stand out against the wiles and crafts of the devil. Flesh and
blood will not so easily bear us out against the secret ensnarings of the heart.
The young prophet doth thunder out his message against the king, 1 Kings xiii. 3,
yet was enticed by the wiles of the old prophet. So we may stand out against an
open assault and apparent violence, but take heed of the secret wiles of Satan.

[4.] The wiles of Satan are to enforce and draw us into those corruptions which
are incident to the season. Here is the great point of spiritual wisdom, to be
seasoned in our mortification, and to withstand the spiritual evil that is apt to grow
upon us in the time of our fears: Ps. lvi. 3, 'What time I am afraid, I will trust in
thee.' Then our great business is, to cherish our dependence upon God, to
prevent distrust and unbelieving thoughts of God's providence. As, on the other
side, in a time when we are likely to be corrupted with ease and prosperity, then
our business is to watch against security and deadness of heart, which is apt to
grow upon us. As Nazianzen said, When things go prosperous with me, I read
the Lamentations of Jeremiah, I remember the mournful passages which befall
the people of God, and that is my cure. So to prevent despondency in a time of
fears, to encourage our souls to dependence.

Now, when our wills are crossed, dangers attend us on every side, and we know
not how far evil will break out to the overturning of all. What are the sins incident
to such a time of trouble? and how do the wiles of Satan come upon us?

(1.) Impatience: Gen. xxx. 1, when the will of Rachel was crossed, she said unto
Jacob, 'Give me children, or else I die' When we impatiently fret against the Lord:
Ps. xxxvii. 1, 'Fret not thyself because of evil-doers; neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.'

(2.) Murmuring and repining against the Lord, that is another snare: Jonah iv. 9, 'I do well to be angry, even unto death;' when he was crossed. Discontent at God's providence gratifieth Satan exceedingly; when we will justify ourselves, and think it a kind of zeal to be angry, and pet against providence.

(3.) A spirit of revenge against instruments, when we do not sweetly calm the heart with the remembrance of God's hand: 2 Sam. xvi. 9, 'Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.' Thus when wicked men disturb order, the heart is apt to rise in revenge, therefore we are to cairn our hearts.

(4.) There is fainting in duty; when we begin to give over prayer, and are discouraged, and are loth to wrestle with God in an ordinance: Heb. xii. 12, 'Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.' When a man's hands begin to wax feeble, and he is discouraged in the ways of the Lord: 'My foot had well-nigh slipped,' saith David, Ps. lxxiii. 2.

(5.) There is closing with sinful means, and running to them for an escape; as Saul, when he was crossed: 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, 'Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her.' When we go to carnal shifts, and unworthy means, these are very natural to us.

(6.) Despair and distrustful thoughts of God, though we have had much experience of his goodness. David, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1, 'I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul,' after all his experience.

(7.) Questioning our interest in God, by reason of crosses, or the doubtful posture of our affairs: Judges vi. 13, 'If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?'

These are the wiles of Satan. Ride out the storm upon gospel encouragements. This will bear us up, it is but a moment to eternity. It is but 'a light affliction, and will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory' 2 Cor. iv. 17. The second point is this:

Doct. 2. That if we would not be overcome by the evil of temptations, we should earnestly deal with God about them.

For so doth our Lord direct us here ('Lead us not into temptation') to come to God himself.
There are two reasons I shall consider of in this discourse: First, We cannot be tempted without the will of God. Secondly, Nor resist without the power of God. Therefore we should deal with God earnestly in all our temptations.

First, We cannot be tempted without the will of God. That God hath a providence in and about temptations, is clear from the scripture: Mat. iv. 1, 'Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.' The Holy Spirit had a hand in it, as well as the evil spirit. So, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, 'God moved David to number Israel and Judah;' but in 1 Chron. xxi. 1, it is said, 'And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.' Satan, he cannot tempt without leave from God. As a lion cannot stir out of his cage, until the keeper brings him out, so the devil, this roaring lion, is held by the irresistible chains of God's providence, and cannot stir until God brings him out. Consider two things:

[1.] To be led into temptation is more than simply to be tempted. God's permitting us to be tempted is not so much as God's leading us into temptation, for these are two distinct phrases. God may permit or suffer us to be tempted, as a lord or sovereign, which hath power over his own creature, for the trial and exercise of grace, and can absolutely dispose of it according to his own will; but he leads us into temptation as a judge. And therefore this is one of the comforts which Job propounds to himself, when Satan had a liberty to molest him: Job ix. 12, 'He taketh away, who can hinder him? who shall say unto him, What doest thou?'

The general of an army may, according to his discretion, lead which band he pleaseth, and set them in the forlorn hope, in a place of the greatest danger, and appoint for reserves which part of the army he pleaseth. So God may single out his champions to combat for his glory, and may leave others in a more quiet posture, according as he pleaseth. Thus, as a sovereign agent, God may suffer to be tempted. But now, to lead into temptation, that is another thing, and implieth something of punishment, or as it is expressed, Mat. xxvi. 41, 'Pray that ye enter not into temptation.' We enter into it by our own voluntary motion, as having forfeited his protection. But then God leads us in as a judge, puts the male factor into the executioner's or officer's hands: so doth God lead us into temptation; it is a judicial act, especially when left to perish under the weight of a temptation.

[2.] Consider God as a judge; he may lead us into temptation two ways: either he may act in way of correction, to manifest his fatherly indignation; or by way of strict punishment. And so, in respect of his fatherly correction, God may give us up to a vexing, or to an ensnaring temptation. He may lead the godly into temptation, that they may be molested and troubled; and may lead the wicked into temptation, that they may be seduced and led away for their eternal ruin. There is a vexing temptation God useth for the correction of his own children; and thus Paul was buffeted by Satan, lest he should be exalted above measure: 2 Cor. xii. 7. The shepherd sets his dog upon the strayed sheep, not to worry him, but to lodge him, and bring him back again into the fold: so doth God suffer his children to be buffeted and exercised by Satan, to their great trouble, but for their good in the issue; for he knoweth how to turn all these things for good. Then
there is an ensnaring temptation, by which the wicked are entangled in a way of
sin; and so Satan, as God's executioner, is said sometimes to blind the eyes of
wicked men, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them,
2 Cor. iv. 4; and sometimes to harden their hearts, John xii. 40, 'lest they should
be converted and healed.' For the punishment of former sins, God may give up
the wicked to be blinded and hardened by Satan to their own destruction, which
is one of the most dreadful acts of God, as a Judge, on this side hell.

Certainly then, when we are tempted, we have great cause to deal with God
about the temptation, for he hath a hand: either he may suffer us to be tempted,
as lord and sovereign; or may lead us into temptation, either in a way of fatherly
correction, or as a mere punishment, that we may more ruin and destroy
ourselves.

I come now to the second reason.

Secondly, God alone can give strength to resist and overcome the temptation;
and therefore we should deal with him very earnestly about it: Rom. xvi. 20, 'The
God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' It is God that treads
down Satan, but under your feet. We fight it out, but the author of the victory is
the God of peace. We are interested in it (for we trample upon Satan with our
own feet), but God's is the grace. Our faculties are not only exercised, but our
graces.

Briefly, two ways doth God concur with the saints in resisting temptations.

First, God plants all those graces in their hearts that are necessary to the conflict
To speak of those three essential graces, faith, fear, and love; these are all
necessary for the resistance of a temptation.

That faith is necessary, 1 Pet. v. 9, 'Whom resist, steadfast in the faith.' And fear
and love, that they also are necessary, I shall prove thus: Satan's weapons
against us, and his way of assaulting, are either subtle wiles or fiery darts: 'That
ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and quench all the fiery
darts of 'the wicked,' Eph. vi. 11, 16. As he assaults us by fiery darts, by raging
and boisterous temptations, take the shield of faith, cover all with the
righteousness of Christ, and with a sense of your privileges by Christ, and that is
it which maintains the heart, and keeps it against the fiery darts of the devil. But
as he assaults us by his wiles, there fear and the love of God comes in, and is
necessary for us. For there are two sorts of wiles that Satan useth for the
destroying of our souls: one is, to convey the temptation by such means as are
most taking with the person tempted; and the other is, disguising and turning
himself into an angel of light, colouring the temptation.

For the first, namely, as he suiteth every distemper of our souls with a proper diet
or food, or tempts us by such means as are likely to prevail, as if a man were
tempted by sensual delight; there the love of God is necessary. Why? For nothing but the love of God will make us deny that which is so near and pleasing to us, or that affection which grows upon the apprehension of his "grace in Christ; therefore the grace of God is said to teach us to 'deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts.' Titus ii. 12.

[2.] For the other wile. As Satan doth transform himself into an angel of light, and cover his base designs with plausible pretences; for instance, revenge shall be accounted zeal; he will disguise it so as that the very apostles shall count it zeal for the glory of God when they called for 'fire from heaven to consume them, even as Elias did.' Luke ix. 54. And carnal counsel shall be counted pity and natural affection: Mat. xvi. 22, 'Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.' He shall be the devil's agent to tempt Christ, and his carnal counsel shall be looked upon as pity to his Master. And licentiousness shall be Christian liberty, and our liberty by Christ shall be used as an occasion to the flesh: Gal. v. 13. And an immoderate use of carnal pleasure shall be Christian rejoicing or Christian cheerfulness. Therefore, as there needs love to withstand the potency of temptation, by the suitableness of the bait to our own affections, so there needs the fear of God: Prov. xiv. 27, 'The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.' When the devil, by his wiles, is laying snares for us, snares of death, the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. A man that is afraid to offend God, and to abuse his liberty, or run into any excess, under colour of grace, is very cautious and watchful, and thereby is not so soon surprised. Thus, when the soul is inflamed by the vehement heat of boiling lusts, or raging despair, faith is necessary: Luke xxii. 31, 32, 'Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.' Faith laying hold upon Christ's righteousness, and waiting for his grace, teaches us to overcome in such conflicts.

But why should I instance in these three graces only, when we are bidden to 'put on the whole armour of God'? Eph. vi. 11, 13. If we would come off with honour in this conflict, we must be completely armed; no power of the soul or sense of the body must be left naked and without a guard, therefore not one saving grace can be wanting.

A Christian is set forth as armed from head to foot. There is for the head a helmet of salvation, which is hope; a breastplate of righteousness; the girdle of truth; for shoes, the gospel of peace; the shield of faith; the sword of the Spirit. These are the graces necessary to resist temptation, and these we have from God. A Christian hath not only weapons offensive, but defensive; not only a sword, but also a shield. Satan hath only weapons offensive, as darts; he hath darts to wound the soul. Again, observe, there is no piece of armour for the back. Why? Because there is no flight in this spiritual warfare; we must stand to it: James iv. 7, 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you'
But let us see what are the pieces of the spiritual armour. The apostle begins with 'the girdle of truth' by which is meant, not truth of doctrine (for that is the sword of the Spirit), but sincerity, or an honest intention; when a man endeavoureth to be both to God and man what he seems to be. Now, it is the Lord that must renew the right spirit within us. Satan he assaults us with wiles, but our armour of proof against him is the girdle of truth. We stand against the wiles of Satan, but we must not fight against him with his own weapons, and put off wiles with wiles; sincerity and honest intention, that is our strength; this is the girdle to the loins, it gives strength and courage to the soul. And then there is 'the breastplate of righteousness' or that grace which puts us upon a holy conversation, suitable to God's will revealed in his word, whereby we endeavour to give God and man their due; it secures the breast and vital parts, the seed of inherent grace in the heart; an honest fixed purpose to obey God in all things. The next thing, the feet must be shod; we shall meet with rough ways in our passage to heaven, and what is that which is armour of proof for our feet? 'The preparation of the gospel of peace' a sense of our peace and friendship made up between God and us through Christ. Without this we shall never follow God in the way of duty when we meet with difficulties and hardships, But 'above all, take the shield of faith.' A shield covers the body, but that which gives defence to all is faith: without this a man is naked. Destitute of Christ's imputed righteousness, he wants his covenant-strength; it applieth Christ's righteousness, and engageth the power of God on our behalf. Then there is 'the helmet of salvation' which is hope: I Thes. v. 8. A well-grounded hope of salvation, it makes us hold up the head in the midst of all waves and sore assaults; that is, it is our great motive and encouragement in the work of sanctification. Then there is 'the sword of the Spirit' which is both offensive and defensive; it wardeth off Satan's blows, and makes him fly back from us as one wounded and ashamed. These are the graces. Now God gives them to us, and therefore he is called 'The God of all grace' 1 Pet. v. 10. Why? because he requires it only? No, but because he giveth it also. And it is called 'The armour of God' ver. 11. God is the author, God is the maker, God is the inventor of this armour, and he doth freely bestow it upon us. The apostle bids us 'take the whole armour of God' ver. 13, that is, take it out of God's hand. This armour is not of our making and procuring, but made to our hands by God himself.

Secondly, He actuates these graces by putting good motions into our hearts, or sweet and gracious thoughts, whereby all the fore-mentioned graces are drawn out. When we are conflicting with sin in an hour of temptation, faith is set a-work: 'That God may fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power;' 2 Thes. i. 11; that is, by a divine power and influence quickening it into acts. Joseph, when he was assaulted by a grievous temptation, he had a gracious motion and thought put into his mind: 'How can I do this wickedness, and sin against God?' Gen. xxxix. 9. Still there is a seasonable remembrance of things by the Spirit, whose office it is to bring all things to remembrance: John xiv. 26. The Spirit doth not only teach us all things, but brings things to our remembrance, when we have need of any truth to be set home upon the heart;
either such a truth as forbids the evil to which we are tempted, or that speaketh comfort and encouragement to us under such a cross; or pressing such a duty as we hang off from. The seasonable remembrance of truths is the great actual help which we have from God. Jesus Christ himself, by seasonable urging the scriptures, defeated the temptation wherewith he was assaulted: Mat. iv. 10, 11. The word quickeneth in affliction: Ps. cxix. 50. Some proper comfort is borne in upon the soul by the power of God. It is not the bare remembrance of truth, but the secret power of God which enliveneth it, and makes it effectual in its season to defeat the temptation.

Use. It directs you what to do in temptations, to go to God for help and strength against them. Briefly, when you treat with God, it should be under a threefold notion:

1. As the author and giver of grace.

2. As the sovereign giver and disposer of it, according to his own will.

3. As a judge, by temptation correcting some foregoing sin by the present temptation.

1. Treat with God as the author and giver of grace: James i. 17, 'He is the father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh down.' And so

[1.] We ought to come to him as renouncing our strength, and waiting for his grace as able to help us. That address Jehoshaphat made in a temporal case is good also in a spiritual: 2 Chron. xx. 12, 'Lord, we have no might; our eyes are unto thee.' There is a renouncing of their own strength, and a dependence upon God. There must be a renouncing of all self-dependence, for God 'gives grace to the humble' James iv. 6. The word humble is to be understood not morally, to those that are of a lowly carriage towards men, of a meek spirit; but it is understood spiritually, of those that, in the brokenness of their hearts, acknowledge their own nothingness and weakness: to these he gives grace. God withholdeth and withdraweth his influences when we do not acknowledge the daily and hourly necessity of grace when we do not desire it with such vehemency as we were wont, nor receive it with such thankfulness and rejoicing. In these three last petitions of the Lord's Prayer: 'Give us this day our daily bread;' then, 'Forgive us our trespasses;' then, 'Lead us not into temptation: 'we beg daily bread, daily pardon, daily strength. We can neither live without the one nor the other: we cannot live without daily bread, nor live comfortably without daily pardon, nor live holily without daily grace. And therefore you are to 'wait upon God all the day,' Ps. xxv. 5; and Ps. xvi. 8, 'I have set the Lord always before me' Now, we may be said to set the Lord before us, either in point of reverence, when we are sensible of his eye and presence, or in point of dependence, when we are still waiting for his strength; and that is the meaning there, 'He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.' Look, as a glass without a
foot falls to the ground, and is broken as soon as it is set out of hand, such a sensible Christian apprehends himself to be if he be out of the hands of God; he is broken, and falls to pieces. Therefore, in this sense, he goes to God, and desires him to keep him from temptation. Dependence begets observance. If the creature could once but live of himself, though it were but for a while, God would seldom hear from him. This is that which is the bridle upon the new creature, to keep up his constant commerce with God.

[2.] We must go to him with confidence, in an actual dependence upon the all-sufficiency of his grace. It is not enough to apprehend our weakness, but we must also go forth in the strength of God; that is, hold up our hearts with a sense of this, that God is able to bear us up, and defeat all our spiritual enemies. God would not take off the temptation from Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 9, but saith, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' He can either weaken temptation, or give in further supply of strength; therefore encourage yourselves in the power of the Lord. The devil cannot tempt us one jot further than the Lord will permit him; his malice is limited and restrained: if you be in Satan's hands, Satan is in God's hands, and can do nothing without his leave and permission; he begs leave to enter into the herd of swine, much less can he enter into the sheep of his pasture.

2. Look upon God, not only as the giver of grace, but as the sovereign giver and disposer of it according to his own will: Phil. ii. 13, 'It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' His giving of grace is altogether free, as what measure of assistance we shall have, and by what means it shall be supplied. God may enlarge or abate the degree of his influence, according to his own will. Now, thus we must come to him, with submission to his good pleasure, either for taking off the temptation, or continuing it for your exercise, or the measure of your supply. When you murmur and fret, it is a sign you have too good thoughts of yourself; when we prescribe to God, it argues some ascribing to ourselves. You are to endeavour, indeed, to pray, and use all good means to come out of temptation; but submit, if the Lord be pleased to continue his exercise upon you. Nay, though God should continue the temptation, and for the present not give out those measures of grace necessary for you, yet you must not murmur, but lie at his feet; for God is Lord of his own grace.

3. You are to look upon God as a judge, correcting some foregoing sin by your present temptation. And therefore

[1.] You must humble yourselves under his mighty hand, when you are exercised with great and sore temptations, and accept the punishment of your iniquity without murmuring; that is the only way to get it off, when you own it as the fruit of sin: Lev. xxvi. 41, 'If then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity;' and Micah vii. 9, 'I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.' Acknowledge the justice of his providence in this trouble that is brought upon you. A Christian must not only look to the malice of Satan in his temptations, but to the justice of God.
Look, as in outward afflictions, we are not to reflect upon instruments: Job did not say, 'The Chaldean and Sabean hath taken,' but 'The Lord hath taken,' chap. i. 23 so in these spiritual afflictions, take the temptation out of God's hand, as a judge. Though Satan pursue you with fiery darts, with temptations horrible and terrible, yet look upon it as the fruit of some foregoing sin. If he should tempt you by injection of despairing fears or blasphemous thoughts, these are not your sins, but they may be a punishment for your sins; so you ought to humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. When you are vexed with such temptations as pierce and prick you in your veins, as David speaks; when the devil bears in blasphemous thoughts upon the heart, they are his sins, but your corrections, justly ordered by God. It may be it is for the correction of your sin that you have provoked God to afflict you thus; and this rod, if it smart, it was dipped in your own guilt, and it is a fruit of God's fatherly indignation for your folly and vanity; for God may thus manifest it, by giving thee up to this severe discipline, to be tempted and vexed by Satan. Now, it is your duty to be sensible of your sin, and say, as Sion in her troubles, Lam. i. 18, 'The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against his commandment.'

[2.] Find out and remove the cause of sin, when God lets loose Satan upon us. Paul discerned it presently as usually God's rod brings light along with it when he was buffeted with a messenger of Satan; it was that he might not be 'exalted above measure,' 2 Cor. xii. 7. Now that which hath provoked God to exercise us with this discipline, that may be known sometimes by the time when this temptation surpriseth us: if it tread upon the heels of some immediate and foregoing provocation that is the sin you should humble your selves for; or by that ill frame and posture of spirit wherein the temptation found you, as Paul's heart was likely puffed up and exalted with his spiritual enjoyments; therefore God lets loose Satan. Sometimes by the nature of the temptation itself, for God suits punishments to sins, and apt and proper remedies to every disease; or else the sin will be cast up by workings of conscience in a way of remorse, as in a tempest that which is at bottom comes on top; or God will discover it by his Spirit, when you go and seek to him. When temptation is grievous and sore, go to God and say, Lord, why is it thus with me? Job xxxiv. 31, 32, 'Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more. That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.' Pray for a discovery of your secret sin, and what is the mind of God in the dispensation. Now, when you have found out the cause of the sin, this is the direction, to remove the cause; for until we let the sin go, God will continue the punishment; though we strive, pray, and ask counsel, our burden will still be continued upon us, until sin be mortified in us, though in some measure it be removed out of our hearts.

But deliver us from evil.
WE come to the close. The words _apo tou poneirou_ may be rendered, either 'from the evil one,' or 'from the evil thing.'

First, From the evil one: Mat. xiii. 19, 'Then cometh, _ho poneiros_, the evil one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart;' and 1 John ii. 13, 'I will write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome, _ton poneiron_, the wicked one;' and 1 John v. 18, 'He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and, _ho poneiros_, that wicked one, toucheth him not;' Eph. vi. 16, 'Take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked,' _tou ponierou_, of that wicked one. In all these places the devil is so called, because his great business is to draw, and drive others to sin; and therefore, as God is 'the holy one,' so Satan is called 'the wicked one.'

Secondly, It may be rendered that evil thing: Mat. v. 37, 'Whatsoever is more than, these cometh, _ek tou poneirou_, of evil;' Mat. v. 39, 'But I say unto you, _mei antisteinai toi poneiroi_, resist not evil.' We are commanded to resist the devil, and therefore in that place clearly it is put for the evil thing; and so in many other places. Now which of these senses shall we prefer?

First, If it be meant of the evil one, or Satan, the words will bear a good sense, thus: If God, for our trial and further humiliation, shall suffer us to be tempted by the devil, yet we desire that he may not have his will upon us, that we be not kept under his power.

To make good this interpretation, know the devil may fitly be called 'the evil one,' for he is the oldest sinner; he sins from the beginning: 1 John iii. 8. And he is the greatest sinner, therefore he is called, Eph. vi. 12, 'spiritual wickedness;' his sins are in the highest degree sinful, every sin of his is a sin against the Holy Ghost, against full light, and with malice and spite against God and the saints. And he is the father of sin, John viii. 44. As Jubal was 'the father of all such as handle the harp and organ' Gen. iv. 21; that is, he was the first that taught the use of that instrument: so all the sins in the world are by his furtherance, both actual and original; therefore he may be fitly called the evil one.

Again, he hath a great stroke in temptation, that he is the artificer, the designer, the improver of them; therefore he is called, _ho peirazon_, 'the tempter' Mat. iv. 3. Well, then, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

Secondly, we may render it indefinitely, as we do, 'Deliver us from evil, 1 that is, from sin. And fitly is this so called, because it is the greatest evil, above poverty, sickness, and worldly loss. Everything which doth harm us, that may be called evil. Now sin doth most hurt; nothing so much as sin. Why? Because it doth endamage our inward man, and endanger our everlasting hopes.

[1.] It doth endamage our inward man, and hindereth and diminish- eth our comfortable communion with God. Other things may harm the man, but they do
not touch the Christian; and therefore saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 'For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.' Breaches made upon the outward man come not so near as a breach made upon the inward man; therefore we faint not, so long as the inward man is safe.

[2.] It doth endanger our everlasting hopes and concerns, and therefore it is the greatest evil. All afflictions do but reach our temporal, but sin reacheth our eternal concerns; and therefore the apostle promiseth himself this kind of deliverance, as that which was most worthy: 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18, 'I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.' Well, then, you see it may be rendered the evil one, or the evil thing. The word carrieth it for sin; kakon denoteth the evil of afflictions, and malum posnse, as well as malum culpa; but ponieron never but evil of fault. And we need not anxiously dispute whether the one or the other, for one cannot be understood without respect to the other. Therefore I shall take it in a general sense that evil which results from temptations, whether they arise from Satan, the world, or our own hearts.

From the words thus opened, the points will be two:

First, That while we are in this valley of tears and snares, we should with earnestness and confidence pray to be delivered from evil.

Secondly, To be kept from the evil of sin is a greater mercy than to be kept from the trouble of temptation.

I observe the first point, because Christ thus directed us to pray to God. The second, because the evil of sin is intended. For the first, we should pray with earnestness, because of our danger, and with confidence, because of God's undertaking. The Lord Jesus knows what requests are most acceptable to his Father. Now when he would give a perfect pattern and platform of prayer, he bids you pray thus: 'Deliver us from evil.' Nay, we have not only Christ's direction, but Christ's example: John xvii. 15, 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.' He did not absolutely pray for an exemption from temptation, though he knew the world would be a tempestuous place, that his people must expect strong assaults Lord, take them not out of the world, but keep them from the evil; so here, 'Deliver us from evil.'

First, We should pray with earnestness, because of our danger from the enemies of our salvation, which are the devil, the world, and the flesh; in respect of all which, we pray to be delivered from evil.

[1.] From the evil which the devil designs against us. Both bad and good men have need to make this prayer: bad men have need; good men will have a heart certainly to pray thus to God, if they consider their danger.
Natural and unconverted men, they are under the power of the devil, if they were sensible of it; for the devils are said to be 'rulers of the darkness of this world,' Eph. vi. 12. By which is meant the wicked, ignorant, and carnal part of the world, whether they live in Gentilism, or within the pale and line of Christ's communion; over all those that live in their unregenerated state of sin and ignorance, over all these, Satan hath an empire and dominion. And mark, when God carried on his kingdom in a way of sensible manifestation, by visions, oracles, and miracles, so did Satan visibly govern the pagan world by apparitions, oracles, lying wonders, and sensible manifestations of himself. But now, when God's kingdom is spiritual, 'the kingdom of God is within yon,' Luke xvii. 21, so by proportion, Satan's kingdom is spiritual too; he rules in the hearts of men, though they little think of it. All natural men, whether they be pagans or Christians, though outwardly and apparently they may renounce the devil's kingdom, and do not seem to have such open communion with him, as the Gentiles that consulted with his oracles, and were instructed by his apparitions, acted by his power, and offered sacrifice to him: but spiritually, all natural men are under the devil; for, 1 John iii. 8, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil;' that is, he belongeth to him. How is he of the devil? They are his children: Acts xiii. 10, 'O thou child of the devil.' And they are his subjects, he ruleth in them, he hath a kingdom among men, which by all means he goeth about to maintain: Mat. xii. 26, 'If Satan be divided against himself, how then can his kingdom stand?' And they are his workhouses, he worketh in them: Eph. ii. 2, 'The spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.' The devil is hard at work in a wicked man's heart, framing evil thoughts, carnal motions; urging them to break God's laws; drawing them on to more sin and villainy; fills their hearts with lying, and all manner of sins: Acts v. 3, 'Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?' He binds them with prejudices, and will not suffer them to hearken to the glorious gospel: 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.' He blinds and holds them captive at his will and pleasure, their souls are fettered: 2 Tim. ii. 26. And sometimes he oppresses their bodies (for Satan carrieth on his kingdom by force, tyranny, fears, and bondage); and therefore it is said, Acts x. 38, that Christ 'went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.' Yet further, as God's executioner, he hath the power over death for their torment: Heb. ii. 14, 'That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' And unless the Lord be merciful, he never ceaseth carrying on wicked men, until both they and he are for ever in hell: Mat. xxv. 41, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' All this is spoken, to show carnal men their condition. Oh that they would seriously think of it! When they do evil, when they slight the motions of God's grace, they are under Satan; and not only by force, as a child of God may be sometimes, but they are willingly ignorant: 2 Pet. iii. 5. The more willingly we commit sin, still the more we are under the power of the devil. Well, then, if any have need to say, 'Deliver us from evil,' certainly unrenewed carnal men have need to go to God, and say, 'Lord, pluck us out of evil;' as the same expression is used, Col. i. 13,
'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,' Hos errusato, who hath delivered us with a strong hand. Oh, go to God, in the name of Christ; there is no way of escape until God pluck you out by main forte. And mark, this power by which we are delivered, God conveyeth by the preaching of the word, which was appointed to turn us from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, Acts xxvi. 18; and therefore hearken to God's counsel before your condition grow incurable, and wait upon the ordinances; for the more you neglect and contemn the means of your recovery, your misery increaseth upon you; for every day you are still more given up to Satan by the just judgment of God, and to be captivated and taken by him at his will and pleasure by the snares he sets for you.

(2.) Good men, or God's own children, though they are delivered from the power of Satan, and brought into the kingdom of Christ, yet they are not wholly free in this world, but are sometimes caught by Satan's wiles, Eph. vi. 11, sometimes wounded by his fiery darts, ver. 16. Their lusts and their consciences are sometimes set a-raging; though he hath no allowed authority over their hearts, yet he exerciseth a tyrannical power; though he cannot rule them, yet he ceaseth not to assault them, if it were but to vex and trouble them. Briefly, the children of God have cause to pray, Deliver us from evil, in regard of Satan, because Satan hath a hand in their persecutions, and like wise a hand in their temptations to sin. It is he that instigateth their enemies to persecute them, and it is he that inflameth their lusts.

(1st.) In stirring up their enemies to persecute them. All the troubles of the children of God, they come originally from the devil: Luke xxii. 53, 'This is your hour, and the power of darkness' We do not read that Satan did immediately vex Christ; and how was that hour then said to be the power of darkness? Why, by setting his instruments a-work to crucify him. And as he dealt with the head, so with the members: Rev. xii. 12, 'The devil hath great wrath, for he knoweth he hath but a short time.' When his kingdom begins to totter and shake, then he stirs up all his wrath, and inflames his instruments, as dying beasts bite hardest. So, Rev. xvi. 14, we read of the spirits of devils that go forth unto the kings of the earth, to stir them up against the saints. If you could behold, with your bodily eyes, this evil spirit hanging upon the ears of great men, and buzzing into them, and stirring them up, and the common people, and animating them against the children of God, you would more admire at the wonders of God's providence that you do subsist. Oh, how they are acted by this wrathful spirit!

(2d.) By inflaming our lusts and corruptions. So, 1 Cor. vii. 5, lest Satan tempt you by your incontinency, sets lusts a-boiling, either to vex the saints or to ensnare them. It is possible he may sometimes prevail with God's own children to draw them to some particular act of gross sin, as 2 Sam. xi. 4, as when David defiled himself with lust, that thereby he may dishonour God; or by this means the name of God was blasphemed, 2 Sam. xii. 14. Or that thereby he may disturb their peace, for this made David lie roaring, Ps. xxxii. 3, 4; his radical moisture
was even wasted and exhausted. Or else to spiritual sins, as murmuring, repining against God, distrust of providence when under crosses. Or when they are in their comforts, to drive them to carnal complacency and neglect of holy things, disuse of communion with God. Or to inordinate passions or spiritual wickedness, such as is not conversant about carnal passions or fleshly lusts, but spiritual pride, error, and unbelief. Certainly those that have anything of experience of the spiritual life cannot be ignorant of Satan's enterprises.

Well, then, we had need go to God to deliver us from evil: for outward evils, for the protection of his providence; for these God hath undertaken: Ps. 1. 15, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee.' Satan is in God's chains; he could not enter into the herd of swine without leave; therefore certainly he cannot get among the sheep of Christ's fold. It is the saying of Tertullian, If the bristles of swine be numbered, the hairs of our head are numbered; therefore you had need go to God ('Deliver us from evil'), that persecution may not rage over you, that he may hedge you in by his providence, Job i. 10, and that he would be as a wall of fire round about you.

As to inward evils, so we go to God for wisdom and strength; for Satan assaults us both ways, by wiles and darts: when he comes in a way of violence, he comes with fiery darts; but when he doth lie in ambush, there he hath his wiles to entice us with a seeming good. We

(1.) Beg wisdom, that you may espy the wiles of Satan, and may not be caught unawares, for he is 'transformed into an angel of light,' 2 Cor. xi. 14. Mark, the devil doth not care so much to ride his own horses, to act and draw wicked men to evil; he hath them sure enough; but he laboureth to employ the saints in his work, if he can, to get one which belongs to God to do his business; therefore he changeth himself into an angel of light. The temptation is disguised with very plausible pretences; then a child of God may be a factor for Satan, and an instrument of the devil. For instance, would Peter have ever made a motion for Satan if he had seen his hand? Oh, no; the temptation was disguised to him when he persuaded his Master from suffering. He covereth his foul designs with plausible pretences. Carnal counsel shall be pity and natural affection; Mat. xvi. 22, 23, 'Let not these things be; be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. He said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me.' At another time, the disciples, when their Master was slighted and contemned, they thought certainly they should do as Elias did, call for fire from heaven to consume them, Luke ix. 54. Revenge will often go for zeal for God. Revenge, or storming at personal affronts or injuries done to ourselves, is looked upon as zeal; then the disciples may not know what spirit they are of. Many times we are acted by the devil when we think we are acted by the Spirit of God, and that which seems to be zeal is nothing but revenge. There fore we had need go to God: Lord, deliver us from evil; we are poor unwary creatures; that we may not be ensnared by fair pretences and surprised by his enterprises. And thus we beg wisdom.
(2.) We pray for strength to withstand his darts, that we may take the armour of God and withstand the evil one, Eph. vi. 13. Alas! of ourselves we cannot deliver ourselves from the least evil, or stand out against the least assault; therefore it is God alone that must keep the feet of his saints, 1 Sam. ii. 9. Therefore we go to him, that we may get his covenant strength, that we may be 'strong in the power of his might,' to conflict with Satan. Well, then, in regard of the first enemy of our salvation, the devil, we had need pray earnestly, that we may not be prevailed over by his arts; it is God alone that can keep us.

[2.] The world, that is another evil which is, as it were, the devil's chessboard; we can hardly move backward or forward but he is ready to attack us and surprise us by one creature or another, and draw us into the snare. Therefore it is said, Gal. i. 4, that Christ 'gave himself for us, that he might deliver us from this present evil world.' That is one way of being delivered from evil, when we are delivered from an evil world. It concerns us, and it is a great point of religion, to be 'kept unspotted from the world,' James i. 27. The whole world is full of evils and temptations, and we cannot walk anywhere but we are likely to be defiled. The things of the world, the men of the world.

(1.) The things of the world. All conditions of life become a snare to us, prosperity, adversity: Prov. xxx. 8, 9, 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me;' &c., 'lest I be full, and deny thee,' &c. Either condition hath its snares. A garment too short will not cover our nakedness, and too long proves lacinia præependens, ready to trip up our heels; and therefore both the one and the other condition are very dangerous. Many carry themselves well in one condition, but quite miscarry in another. As Ephraim was as a cake not turned, baked on the one side, Hosea vii. 8, quite dough on the other. Or as it is said of Joab, 1 Kings ii. 28, 'He turned after Adoni-jah, though he turned not after Absalom.' Some miscarry in adversity, others in prosperity. Indeed more under prosperity. Diseases which grow out of fulness are more rife than those which grow out of want; and fat and fertile soils are more rank of weeds. God's children most miscarry when all things are prosperous and flow in upon them, when they have lived in plenty. David was not soiled while he wandered up and down in the wilderness; but when he walked upon the terrace of his palace in Jerusalem, then he fell to lust and blood. The un- soundness of a vessel is not seen when it is empty; but when filled with water, then we see whether it be stanch, or leaky or no.

But the other condition is not without its snares neither. In adversity we are apt to be impatient, as well as in prosperity to be forgetful of God; and therefore we had need learn how to go up hill and down hill, to 'know how to abound, and how to be abased,' Phil, iv. 12. Look, as the wind doth rise from all corners, so do temptations. When we are kept low and bare, or in danger, then we are full of worldly fears, distrusts, cares, grow base, pusillanimous, and have not the spirit and generosity of a Christian. In a high condition we are proud, secure, forgetful
of changes, vain, wanton; and press towards heaven less, and grow dead to
good things.

(2.) As from the things of the world, so from the men of the world. We are apt to
be poisoned by their bad example, and easily catch a sickness one from another.
Good men may receive a taint: Isa. vi. 5, 'I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell
in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' Open excesses do soon, manifest their
own odiousness. I confess, a man that runs into open excess, we are not so
much in danger of being enticed by him to the like practice; but we learn of one
another secretly to be cold, careless, and less mortified. I say, though we are not
carried into inordinate practices and gross wicked nesses by the example of
others, yet we learn to be cold in the profession of godliness, formal, less stirring
in the way of holiness, and sometimes ensnared by their counsels. The flood and
torrent of evil examples and counsels is so great, that it carrieth away men: Gal.
ii. 13, 'Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.' And the wills of
men is one of our snares, 1 Pet. iv. 2. And besides, we are in danger to be
terrified by their frowns, and act unseemly: Isa. viii. 13, 'Fear not their fear, nor be
afraid.' Out of the fear of men we are apt to miscarry in our duty to God. Well,
then, we need to go to God to be delivered from the evil of the world, that we
may not be infected nor terrified by the men of the world; or, which is the more
usual temptation, corrupted by the things of the world. The world doth secretly
and slightly insinuate with us; and therefore keep us from evil.

Now how comes the world to be evil?

In two things, when both our care and our delight is lessened to wards heavenly
things.

(1.) When our care is lessened, when we are not so serious, so frequent in
communion with God as we were wont to be; as Martha, that was 'cumbered
about many things,' but Mary 'had chosen the better part,' Luke x. 42. When you
begin to lessen your cares of duty, and Hagar thrusts Sarah out of doors, when
the son of the bond-woman begins to mock at the son of the free-woman, when
religion begins to be looked upon but as mopishness; to be so nice, precise, and
so careful to maintain constant commerce with God; and begin to have lessening
thoughts of God, and religion goes to the walls. So,

(2.) When our delight is less in heavenly things, when we have lost our savour of
the word, and ordinances, and Sabbaths, and they are not so sweet as before: 1
John ii. 16, 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' When
the love of the world hath made you weary of the love of God, when your heart
goes a-whoring from God, the chief good. As when the affections are scattered, a
man is tempted to look upon other objects, the wife of the bosom is defrauded of
her right; so God is defrauded by an over-delight in the creature, the world
intercepts your delight: Ps. lixiii. 27, 28, 'Thou hast destroyed all them that go a-
whoring from thee; but it is good for me to draw nigh to God.' When our delight in
communion with God is lessened by delight in the creature, it is spiritual adultery. Now when worldly objects are so continually with us, soliciting our affections, and drawing us away from God, oh what need have the best of us to pray, 'Lord, keep us from evil!' The soul doth easily receive a taint from the objects to which we are accustomed; therefore they which live in the world had need to take heed of a worldly spirit. The continual presence of the object doth secretly entice the heart; as long suits prevail at length, and green wood kindles by long lying in the fire. Insensibly is the heart drawn away from God, and you shall find less savour in holy things.

[3.] We had need to pray earnestly, Lord, keep us from evil, because we are in danger of that other enemy, the flesh. There is not only an evil without us, as the devil and the world, but an evil within us: 'An evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God,' Heb. iii. 12. An evil heart, that is full of urgings and solicitations to sin. There are not only snares and temptations in the world, but there is a flexibleness in the party tempted: James i. 14, 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed,' hupo teis idias epithumias of his own lust. The fire burns in our own hearts, Satan doth but blow up the flame. There is bad liquor in the vessel, Satan doth but only give it vent, and set it abroach with violence. We carry sinning natures about with us, therefore, Lord, 'Deliver us from evil.' The evil of the world would do no more hurt than the fire doth to a stone, if we were not combustible matter: 'The corruption that is in the world through lust,' 2 Pet. i. 4. The danger of living in the world doth not stand in this, because here are so many enticements and baits for every sense; but it is the corruption through lust; as the venom is not in the flower, but in the spider. The Philistines could not prevail against Samson if Delilah, on whom he doted, had not lulled him asleep; or as Balaam first corrupted Israel before he could curse them or bring them any harm: so corruption in the heart makes us liable to Satan's malice. There is a treacherous party within to open the door to Satan, without which all outward force could not annoy us.

Well, then, we had need go to God: Lord, 'Deliver us from evil.'

Where we beg:

(1.) That God would weaken the strength of inbred corruption, that we may not be foiled by it. Paul groans sadly, Rom. vii. 24, 'wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' It is a question, but it implieth a wish, for the Hebrews propose their wishes by way of question; that is, Oh that I were delivered! It is a great mercy to be kept from falling into sin: 'kept from every evil work,' 2 Tim. iv. 18.

(2.) If we be foiled by our corruption, we beg that we may not lie in it, nor grow weary of our resistance, nor cast away our weapons, and suffer sin to have a quiet reign: Ps. cxix. 133, 'Let not any iniquity have dominion over me.' We cannot hope for a total exemption from sin, but, Lord, let it not reign over us. How
shall we know when sin reigns? When there is no course of mortification set up against it, to break the power, force, and tyranny of it. Take this distinction: There are remaining and reserved corruptions; sin remains where it doth not reign; but reserved corruption, that is reigning. I will explain it thus: sin remains when, notwithstanding all our endeavours, yet it still haunts and pesters us, though praying, watching, striving, waiting, and depending upon God for strength; but it is reserved when you let it alone and are loth to touch it, but rather cherish, dandle, and foster it in the heart, and make provision for it. Therefore then are we delivered from evil when we recover by repentance; and though we suffer by the tyranny of sin, we will not let it alone to have a quiet reign in our hearts, do not live under the power of corruptions. Sin let alone will do us further mischief.

Secondly, As we have reason to pray to God with earnestness, be cause of our danger; so with confidence, because of God's undertaking: 2 Thes. iii. 3, 'The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil' God hath undertaken to keep those who, with humble and broken hearts, do come to him to be kept from evil; that are watchful, serious, and careful to get evils redressed as soon as discerned; therefore we may come with an assured confidence to be delivered from all evil.

How far hath God undertaken to keep his people from evils and dangers in this life? I answer:

[1.] So far as may be hurtful to their souls: 1 Cor. x. 13, 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' It is part of God's faithfulness to keep you from evil, to proportion and temper temptation to your strength. God suits the burden to every back, he drives on as the little ones are able to bear; therefore certainly he will mitigate temptation, or give in supply of strength.

[2.] God will keep you from the evil of sin so far as it is deadly; that is, that it be not a sin unto death, 1 John v. 16; and that it may not reign in our mortal bodies, for you are dead to it: Rom. vi. 14, 1 For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.'

[3.] God undertakes for our final deliverance from all evil upon our translation to heaven. This is included in this prayer, that we may at length come to that state where is no sorrow, no sin, no assault and temptation from Satan, that we may be kept from all wickedness: Ps. xxxiv. 19, 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all' There is a time when God delivereth us from all at once, and that is by death and our translation into heaven.

Well, then, let us fly to God for deliverance, waiting for his help.
Doct. That to be kept from the evil of temptation is a greater mercy than to be kept from the trouble of temptation.

1 Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; that is, if we be led into temptation, let us be kept from the evil of it.

First, It is a more wonderful providence to be kept from evil than from temptation; esse bonum facile est, ubi quod vetat esse remotum est. It is no great matter to be chaste or honest, when there is no temptation to the contrary. Ay, but to keep our integrity in the midst of assaults and temptations, there is the wonder. If a garrison be never assaulted, it is no wonder that it standeth exempt from the calamity of war. This is like the bush that was burned, yet not consumed; exercised with temptation from day to day, and yet kept from evil.

And in this sense God's power is more glorified than in keeping the angels; for the angels are out of gun-shot and harm's way, and not liable to temptations. But to preserve a poor weak creature in the midst of temptation, oh, how is the power of God 'made perfect in weakness!' 2 Cor. xii. 9: perfected, that is, gloriously discovered.

Secondly, The evil of sin is greater than the evil of affliction or trouble.

[1.] The evil of sin is the greater evil, because it separateth from God: Isa. lix. 2. It is an aversion from the chiefest good. Affliction doth not separate from God, it is a means to make us draw nigh to him. Poverty, sickness, blindness, loss of goods, let a man be never so low and loathsome, yet if in a state of grace, the Lord taketh pleasure in him, and he is near and dear to God; God kisseth him with the kisses of his mouth; nothing is loathsome to God but sin.

[2.] Sin is evil in itself, whether we feel it or no; affliction is not evil in itself, but in our sense and feeling: Heb. xii. 11. Sin is evil, whether we feel it or no; it is worse when we do not feel it: 'Past feeling,' Eph. iv. 19, when our conscience is benumbed.

[3.] Affliction, or malum pcence, is an act of divine justice; but malum culpce is an act of man's corruptness. For the first, affliction, Amos vi. 3, 'Is there any evil, and the Lord hath not done it?' But sin is the devil's work in us: 1 John iii. 8, 'He that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' And John viii. 34, 'Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.' The one cometh from a just God, the other from our corrupt hearts. The one is the act of a holy God, the other the act of a sinful creature.

[4.] The death of Christ falls more directly upon this benefit exemption from sin: Mat. i. 21, 'He shall save his people from their sins;' Acts iii. 26, 'God having
raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities; not troubles or sorrows, but sins.

[5.] Affliction is a more particular temporal evil, but sin is an infinite universal evil. Sickness depriveth us of health, poverty of wealth, &c., and every adverse providence doth but oppose some particular temporal good; but sin depriveth us of God, who is the fountain of our comfort; the other but of some limited comfort.

[6.] Afflictions are sent to remove sin: Heb. xii. 11, 'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby;' Isa. xxvi. 9, 'When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness:' but sin is not sent to remove affliction. Now the end must be greater than the means, both as to prosecution and aversation. As to prosecution; to dig for iron with mattocks of gold and silver. So in aversation; if death were not worse than the pain of physic, no man would take physic to avoid death.

[7.] Affliction is the effect of God's love: Heb. xii. 6, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' But to be left to sin is an effect of God's anger. God doth not always exempt from troubles; yet if he keep from spiritual hurt thereby, if he sanctify the trouble, support us with sufficient grace, 2 Cor. xii. 9; if preserved from evil, howsoever tempted and exercised, it is enough.

Use 1. To reprove our folly. We complain of other things, but we do not complain of sin, which is the greatest evil. This is contrary to the spirit of God's children, who rejoice in troubles, but not in sins: 2 Cor. xii. 9, 'Most gladly therefore will I rejoice in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.' They groan bitterly under sins: Horn. vii. 23, 'wretched man!' &c. If any man had cause to complain of afflictions, Paul had: in perils often, whipped, persecuted, stoned. But the body of sin and death was the greatest burden: lusts troubled him more than scourges; his captivity to the law of sin more than prisons. When affliction sitteth too close, sin sits loose. In affliction there is some offence done us, but in sin the wrong is done to God. And what are we to God? Afflictions may be good, but sin is never good. The body suffereth by affliction, but the soul suffereth by sin loss of grace and comfort, which are not to be valued by all the world's enjoyments. The evil of affliction is but for a moment like rain, it drieth up of its own accord; but the evil of sin is for ever, unless it be pardoned and taken away. Sin is the cause of all the evils of affliction; therefore when we complain, we should complain, not so much of the smart, as of the cause of it.

2. It directeth us:

[1.] How to pray to God against sin rather than trouble. This is indeed to be delivered from evil: 2 Tim. iv. 18, Paul reckoned upon that, 'He will deliver me from every evil work.' When afflicted, you should rather desire to have the
affliction sanctified than removed; you will be most careful for that; saints do not pray for the interests of the old man rather than the new man. To be freed from trouble is a common mercy, but to have it sanctified is a special mercy. Carnal men may be without affliction, but carnal men cannot have experience of grace. Bare deliverance is no sign of special love.

[2.] In our choice. It was a heavy charge they put upon Job: Job xxxvi. 21, 'Thou hast chosen iniquity rather than affliction.' Sometimes we are put upon the trial, to lose the favour of God or the favour of men, duty and danger: here content myself, gratify my lusts and interests; there offend God. Out of the temptation, we could easily judge that all the misery in the world is to be endured rather than commit the least sin. But how is it upon a trial, when a worldly convenience and a spiritual inconvenience is proposed? By choosing sin, a man cannot altogether escape affliction here or hereafter. Wickedness, though it prosper a while, yet at length it proveth a snare.

3. It directeth us to submit to God's providence, and to own mercy in it. Though God doth not exempt us from troubles, yet if he keep us from hurt thereby, if he sanctify the trouble, and support us with grace sufficient, it is his mercy to us. For Daniel to be put into the lions' den was not so great a judgment as for Nebuchadnezzar to have the heart of a beast. To be given up to our own hearts' lusts, to commit any sin, it is a greater cross than any misery that can light upon us; therefore let us be patient under affliction. Our great care should be, not to dishonour God in any condition. God hath promised to be with his people in their afflictions to comfort them; but hath never promised to be with his people in their sins: 'I will be with you in the fire, and in the water' as the Son of God was with the three children in the fiery furnace. But God is departed when they sin; I will go to my own place. Sin hindereth prayer, but afflictions quicken it: Isa. xxvi. 16, 'Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.' In affliction it is a time to put the promises in suit; it doth not hinder our access to God and the throne of grace, but driveth us to it. But sin increaseth our bondage, maketh us stand at a distance, and grow shy of God. The fruit of sin is shame, Rom. vi. 21.

4. It teaches us how to wait and hope for the issue of our prayers. Pray that ye enter not into temptation; yet be not absolute in that, but to be kept from evil, that what way soever we are tried we may be kept from the evil of sin.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

Amen.

IN these words we have the conclusion of all, and that which giveth us confidence in the requests we make to God.
First, the confirmation is taken from the excellency of God, to whom we pray; where there is a declaration of what belongeth to God:

Secondly, the duration and perpetuity, for ever.

Three things are mentioned as belonging to God—kingdom, power, and glory.

1. By kingdom is meant God's right and authority over all things, by which he can dispose of them according to his own pleasure.

2. By power is meant his sufficiency to execute this right, and to do what he pleaseth, both in heaven and earth.

3. The final cause of all is his glory. 'Thine is the glory,' or the honour of all things in the world belongs to thee. Glory is excellency discovered with praise. We desire that he may be more honoured and brought into request and esteem.

Secondly, we have the signification and sealing of our requests in the word Amen; which is, signaculum fidei, an expression of our faith and hope. And actus desiderii, the strength of our desire. There is the Amen of faith, and the Amen of hearty desire; as by and by.

Now let us look upon this conclusion, first, as a doxology or expression of praise to God: and the note is:

Doct. That in every address to God, lauding or praising of God is necessary.

For in this perfect form of prayer Christ teacheth us, not only to ask things needful for ourselves, but to ascribe to God things proper to him.

There are two words used in this case in scripture, praise and blessing. Praise relateth to God's excellency, and blessing to his benefits: Ps. cxlv. 10, 'All thy works shall praise thee, Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.' All the works of God declare his excellency; but the saints will ever be ascribing to God the benefits they have received from him. So they are spoken of as things, though somewhat alike, yet as distinct: Neh. ix. 5, 'Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.' Our praise cannot reach the excellency of his nature; nor our blessing express the worth of his benefits. Both may be here intended. For thine is the kingdom and power, relateth to his excellency, and thine is the glory, to his benefits; for God's glory is the reflex of all his works, and so expresseth the benefits showed to the sons of men, especially to his people.

Well, then, whenever you would pray to God to bless you, you must bless God again, and praise his name: Eph. i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.' It is the echo and reflex of his grace and mercy to the creatures. God blesseth us, and we bless God; as the echo returneth the word, or the wall
beateth back the beams of the sun. Only consider, we bless God far otherwise
than he blesseth us: God's blessing is operative, ours declarative; his words are
accompanied with power: *benedicere* is *benefacere*. He doth good; we speak
good when we remember the blessed effects of his grace, and tell what he hath
done for our souls.

The reasons why we are to mingle praises and thanksgivings with our requests
are these:

[1.] Because this complieth more with the great end of worship; which is not so
much the relief of man as the honour of God; there fore we should not only intend
the supply of our necessities, for that is but a brutish cry, howling for corn, wine,
and oil, Hosea vii. 14; but we should intend also the honour of God: Ps. 1. 23,
'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.' A man may offer requests to God, yet not
honour him, but seek himself; but he that offereth praise glori fieth me. He that
doeth affectionately, and from his heart, give God the honour of his attributes and
titles in scripture, he glorifieth him; and therefore worship being for the glory of
God, that should not be left out.

[2.] This is the most effectual spiritual oratory, or way of praying: Ps. lxvii. 5, 'Let
the people praise thee, God, let all the people praise thee.' What then? 'Then
shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.'
We have comforts increased the more we praise God for what we have already
received. The more vapours go up, the more showers come down; as the rivers
receive so they pour out, and all run into the sea again. There is a constant
circular course and recourse from the sea unto the sea. So there is between God
and us; the more we praise him the more our blessings come down; and the
more his blessings come down the more we praise him again; so that we do not
so much bless God as bless ourselves. When the springs lie low we pour a little
water into the pump, not to enrich the fountain, but to bring up more for our
selves.

---

This article is provided as a ministry of *Third Millennium Ministries*. If you
have a question about this article, please email our Theological Editor. If you
would like to discuss this article in our online community, please visit our
*RPM Forum*.

**Subscribe to RPM**

RPM subscribers receive an email notification each time a new issue is
published. Notifications include the title, author, and description of each
article in the issue, as well as links directly to the articles. Like RPM itself,
*subscriptions are free*. To subscribe to *RPM*, please select this [link](#).