





A  
SERMON

Preach'd before the Right Honourable the  
Lord Mayor of LONDON,  
THE  
COURT of ALDERMEN,  
AND THE  
Governors of the several HOSPITALS  
Of the CITY.  
AT THE  
Parish-Church of St. Sepulchre,  
On Wednesday in EASTER-Week.  
Being one of the Anniverfary Spittal SERMONS.

LUKE XII. 21.  
*So is he that layeth up Treasure for himself, and is  
not rich towards GOD.*

By ROBERT MOSS, D D. Chaplain in Ordina-  
ry to her MAJESTY, and Preacher to the  
Honourable Society of Grays-Inn.

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St. LUKE XII. 21.

*So is he that layeth up Treasure for himself, and is not Rich towards God.*

**T**HE whole Context, taking it up at the Fifteenth Verse runs thus: *And he said unto them, Take heed and beware of Covetousness: For a Man's Life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth.* And he spake a Parable unto them, saying, the Ground of a certain Rich Man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, what shall I do, because I have no Room to bestow my Fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my Barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my Fruits and my Goods. And I will say to my Soul, Soul, thou hast much Goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be required of thee: Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up Treasure for himself, and is not Rich towards God. In which Passage our Saviour's main design appears to be to lay in a Caution against Covetousness, or Worldliness of Mind; alledging as a sufficient Reason against it, that a Man depends not, either for his being, or well-being, upon the Superfluity of his Riches. And to give Life to this Reason by Example, he proposes by way of Parable, a very extraordinary Case of a Rich Man growing still richer and richer, even to Satiety: Inasmuch that his very abundance became a Burden to him, and he was at a loss how to bestow the huge Mass of Wealth that he had got together. At last he wisely, as he thinks, resolves to enlarge his Barns and Store-Houses, and provide himself of all Conveniencies; and upon that thought he gives

gives his Soul a *Quietus* from all Cares, and promises himself many a fair year to come, and all jocund and pleasurable as Heart could wish. In the mean while he made little reckoning of the uncertainty of Life; little did he consider, (that if God had so decreed) he must yield it up before the next day dawn'd and leave his much-beloved Wealth to be possess'd and enjoy'd by another.

And because this is a thing that may happen at any time, and for some special Reasons of Providence is but too likely to happen to those that doat immoderately upon the World, our Saviour makes a general Application of it in the Words of the Text: *So is he that layeth up Treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God*, i. e. So in some degree, is it like to fare with all those that set their Heart upon Riches, and put their trust in them; but take no care to make that wise use of them, which would procure a lasting Interest in God's Favour; which is more precious than whole heaps of Gold and Rubies. And this is experimentally true; For tho' the Fate of such Worldly-minded Men is not always a sudden and unexpected Death, yet their hopes, let things go how they will, vanish still in Disappointment, and end in Misery.

From the Words thus explain'd and apply'd I find ground to raise these two Observations, which shall be the Subject of my following Discourse. *viz.*

I. That a greedy desire of Riches, and a fond Reliance upon them, is the most wretched kind of Folly and Improvidence. And,

II. On the contrary, That the best Enjoyment, and wisest Improvement of our Worldly Wealth, is to be rich towards God; that is, so to use and employ what we have, as to recommend our selves to his Benediction and Favour thereby.

I. My First Observation is, That a greedy Desire of Riches, and a fond Reliance upon them, is the most wretched kind of Folly and Improvidence. And this we shall find exactly verifi'd in the worldly-minded Man, tho' every Stage that he passes: Whether we consider him as busied in getting of Wealth, or vainly using it; or summon'd un-

willingly to leave it; or finally to render Account of it. And,

*First*, If we consider him whilst he is busied in getting of Wealth, we find him perpetually full of anxious Cares and infinite Troubles. fatigu'd with constant Labours, entring into various Projects, and following every pursuit where the Scent of Profit leads; without allowing himself any rest by Day, hardly any sleep by Night. And to what purpose all this? Only to make himself very rich. And why that? Only in order to be still richer. For he knows not how to set Bounds to the Darling Passion that he so much indulges. Other Appetites, tho' very keen and craving, may easily be appeas'd: Our Hunger with a full Meal; our Thirst with a large Draught: But the Man that hungers and thirsts after Riches cannot take his fill of them. This Appetite, the more it is fed, the more greedy and voracious it grows; crying out still, give, give, swallowing all like the Grave, but never to be satisfied. So that it may well be said of the hungry Worldling, as *Abigail* did of the Churl her Husband, *Nabal is his Name, and Folly is with him.* [1 Sam. 25. 25.] For tho' it is his eager desire, and whole study to be very rich, yet he can never find in his heart to think himself rich enough: He will still be poor in Opinion, and therefore miserable in Reality. So vain is all his Labour, so endless is his drudgery.

Besides, there's another Snare that lyes full in the way of him that *will be rich* (1 Tim. 6. 9.) and often stops him in his Progress, and disappoints him of his end; upon which his Eye is so earnestly fix'd, and his Heart so entirely bent, that he is little scrupulous about the means, if by any means he can but hope to compass it.

This it is that makes him so apt to betake himself to the wretched Arts of Extortion and Oppression, and all manner of injustice and Cruelty: This he foolishly imagines to be the shortest Cut to a great Estate, never considering with all his Cunning, that the Curse of God is still hovering over him, and ready to pursue him to his Destruction, *in his basket and in his Store, in the Fruit of his Body, and the Fruit of his land in the*

*the Increase of his Kine, and the Flocks of his Sheep, and in all that he sets his hand unto.* (Deut. 28. 17.) Thus, whilst he is making over much hast to be Rich, Poverty stealeth after him, and cometh upon him as an armed Man, and strip-peth him of all the Booty, he is forc'd to part with it himself, or else to leave it to his Heir, with a heavy Curse entail'd along with it. So improvident and Proposterous in this wicked Method of growing Rich!

*Secondly*, If we take a view of the Worldling whilst he is using the Wealth he is Possessor of, we shall find him still liable to the same Imputation. Whilst he is using his Wealth, did I say? That Possibly may be put the Case more favourably than he deserves. For perhaps he is barely the Possessor of it, or rather the Keeper, or the watcher over it? perhaps he has not the Heart to use it at all: For this is an unnatural Sympton that frequently attends those who are the most immoderate Lovers of it. Very unnatural sure! for our other Appetites serve to put us in mind of providing for the Necessities of Nature: The Sense of Hunger and of Cold do naturally prompt us to seek for Food and Raiment. But, in this Starveling Disease of the Mind, the Man suffers all the Pain of eager Desire, without applying the proper Relief, even when he has it in his Power. He is insatiable greedy of Money, whose whole value consists in using, and yet he cannot endure to make use of it when he has it: He shuns Poverty of all things, and yet he chuses to be poor in the midst of Plenty; which is certainly a most extravagant Folly, or rather a Frenzy, much like that which the Physicians call *Hydrophobia*, that makes People afraid of touching the Water, even when they most passionately thirst after it. And yet *this is an Evil* (as *Solomon* says,) *that is common among Men: A Man to whom God hath given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not Power to eat thereof, but a Stranger eateth it: This is Vanity, and it is an Evil Disease.* (Ecclesi. 6. 1.)

But to leave the Miser that loves only to sit brooding over his useless Pelf, let us consider him that runs into the other Extream, and makes a vain and prodigal use of it; consuming it upon his Lusts, in all manner of Licentious and Riorous living; or, at best, gratifying the Senses in a more refin'd way of Volup'tuousness, with all the Pomp and Splendour of Life, and all the Delicacies of Art and Nature; Magnificent Buildings, Sumptuous Feastings, Musick and Dancing, and whatever else is most exquisitely delightful in its kind. Now it must be said of the Man that devotes himself to this kind of Life, and desires to make no other use of his Time or Money, that he is too improvident and negligent of both: For certainly a good part of both might be employ'd to much better Advantage, as will be seen by and by.

In the mean time, amidst all these agreeable Amusements and Entertainments, some Defilement (more or less) will be contracted; the Affections will be drawn away, the thoughts too much diverted, that Seriousness and Composedness which Religion requires scattered: and, whilst the outward Senses are continually feasted, the Soul will grow lean, as being utterly bereav'd of all spiritual Good, without so much as the Relish of it.

In a Word, Whilst there is so much of Paradise (in such Mens Opinion) to be enjoy'd upon Earth, the Hope or Desire of Heaven will find but little Place. And sure this must be tax'd for the greatest Improvidence that can be, to prosecute a present foolish Pleasure, with the Neglect, nay the Forfeiture of a future, more important, and more durable Interest; as will still be more apparent, if,

Thirdly, We look upon the Man that doats on this World, when he is once summon'd to leave it. For then the anxious Pleasure (if it may be call'd by that Name) of getting Wealth, and the frothy Pleasure of spending it in Vanities, will both cease: The penurious Miser, when once he perceives Death approaching, will cast his languishing eyes about him, and soon spy the long-expected Heir ready to seize upon his well kept Treasure; which will give the Wretch a Pain as piercing as that of Death it self. Then he will see Reason to call himself

Fool,

(495.)

Fool, for defrauding his own Soul, and making himself the vilest of Slaves, for one that perhaps returns him but little Thanks, because he at last unwillingly parts with what he can keep no longer. And perhaps his hard Heart may begin a little to relent too, and to wish that some of that hoarded gold which must now see the Light against his will, had been before bestow'd in such Acts of Piety and Mercy, as might have brought him in some Comfort in this the day of his necessity; which he vainly hopes [when 'tis now too late] to redeem by a Tax upon his Heir, and some charitable Bequest upon his Death-Bed.

And as for the jolly Epicure, the Aspect of Death must needs be a very unwelcome Surprise to him, whose whole Study it had been to refine upon the Pleasures of Life, without the melancholy thought of Dying. And therefore when he finds he must die, he will be apt to cry out in the anguish of his Soul [Eccles. 41. 1.] *O Death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to the Man that liveth at rest in his Possessions, that hath nothing to vex him; and that hath Prosperity in all things!* Especially to one that is in the Strength and Vigour of his Years, and has had the highest relish of all pleasurable Enjoyments; of which the remembrance also is now become bitter.

It is indeed said of \* *Sardanapalus*, a Prince infamous for his Effeminacy, that it was engraven upon his Tomb, *All that's my own that I have spent in Luxury and Leudness.* But surely it can be no Cordial to a Christian upon his sick Bed; it must rather be a very unpleasing Reflection at the Approach of Death, for a Man to look back upon his past life, and find it all lavish'd away in frolicksome Delights, or even the more innocent sort of Pleasures; and that this is all the Use that he has made of a plentiful Fortune. For however such a Man might venture to live, he can hardly die in his Senses, without wishing that he had abated of the excessive Riches of his own Apparel, to cloth the Naked; and of the Superfluity of his own costly Dainties, to feed the Hungry; and that he had spar'd some time from his Mirth and Revelling for devout

\* *Plut. 330. ταύτ' ἔχων ὅσος ἐφαγον καὶ ἐφύγετα.*

(596)



Meditation and religious Retirement. Death cannot but convince him of the deplorable Folly of neglecting these things in their proper Season: Which must make not only the Reflection, grating to him at the present, but the Prospect still more uncomfortable for the future. Which we shall see if,

*Fourthly*, We take our last view of the Worldling, when he comes to appear before God's Tribunal, and render an Account of what he has received. For then the Miser that so carefully hid what was committed to his Trust in a Napkin, and the Prodigal that so heedlessly squander'd it away in pursuit of Vanities, will both stand trembling with Guilt, and under dreadful Apprehensions of the Woe so justly denounc'd against all such by the Apostle St. James: [*James* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,] *Go to now, ye Rich Men, weep and howl for your Miseries that shall come upon you. Your Riches are corrupted, and your Garments Morth-eaten: Your Gold and Silver is canker'd, and the Rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your Flesh as it were fire: Ye have heaped Treasure together for the last days. Behold, the Hire of the Labourers which have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the Cries of them which have reaped are enter'd into the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, Ye have lived in Pleasure on the Earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your Hearts as in a day of Slaughter: Ye have condemned and killed the Just; and he doth not resist you.*

Conscious therefore of having receiv'd their good things, in their Life-time, and so much abus'd them, they must expect then to receive Evil Things; They can expect no other but to hear to their Eternal Confusion, the last peremptory Sentence; even of the Judge that would have shewn e'm Mercy, if there had been room for it: [*Matth.* 25. 41, &c.] *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in; Naked, and ye clothed me not, Sick and in Prison, and ye visited me not.*

And all Pleas will then be in vain: For if they should pretend to answer, saying, *Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or*

*atbirst, or a Stranger, or Naked, or Sick and in Prison, and did not Minister unto thee?* He shall answer them again, and silence them for ever, *Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye did it not unto me.* And now in the last result of things, we cannot but be sensible of the wretched Improvidence, and the remediless folly of all that lay up treasure for themselves, and are not rich towards God; because we see what their final Doom is like to be.

I come now to make good my second Observation, *viz.*

II. That on the contrary, the best Enjoyment, and wisest Improvement of our Worldly Wealth, is to be *Rich towards God*; or as St. Paul expresses it, to be *rich in good Works*: Which is the certain way to recommend our selves to the Divine Benediction and Favour; which is ever attending upon the man that is so piously, so charitable dispos'd, under every Circumstance that we can consider him.

To follow therefore the Track in which we are already, let us consider him.

*First*, as employing himself in his lawful Vocation, to provide for himself and Family, or to get an Estate: and we shall find that he always looks up to God in the first place, as the Dispenser of all good things, and the Disposer of all Mens Fortunes: And therefore he presumes not to be his own Carver, or to seek to better his Condition in any Method that God approves not. He knows himself to be much safer and more likely to prosper in a firm dependance upon his good Providence, not excluding his own moderate Care, and honest Industry and frugal Management; which are all of them in natural tendency of things, very thriving Virtues. And besides, as the properest Expression of his trust in God, he never fails to put up his humble Prayer, that God would bless his endeavour in such a manner as may be most expedient for him. And to shew that he entertains no doubt of the Goodness of Providence, he omits not to [*Luke.* 11. 41.] *Give Alms of such Things as he hath*; if he has but little, he does his diligence, gladly to give of that little, resting fully assur'd that (1. *Tim.* 6. 6.) *Godliness with contentment is great Gain*; and that if (Heb. 13. 5.) *his Conversation be without Covetousness, and he remain*

remain content with such things as he has, God will not leave him nor forsake him; that [Prov. 18. 27.] *he that giveth to the Poor shall not lack*; that [Prov. 19. 17.] *he that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given shall be paid him again.* It must be granted therefore, that such a Man has the truest Enjoyment of what he possesses, and is in the fairest way to improve it; whether we consider the easiness of his Mind and the clearness of his Conscience, or the security of his dependance and the interest that he has in God's gracious Promises, which is a Treasury that will never fail him. In the mean time, *Better is a little with the Fear of the Lord, than great Treasure and Trouble therewith*; which is always the plenteous Portion of the ungodly Worlde. Of all which we shall still be farther satisfy'd, if,

*Secondly*, We examine the pious and merciful Man, how he behaves himself in the use of that Wealth with which God hath prospered him: For that will ever be with all Sobriety, and Moderation, and Humility and Thankfulness. He esteems his *Riches* to be the bountiful Gifts of Heaven, and therefore he makes a *Religious* scruple of rendring them useless to himself or others; and much more of abusing them to the dishonour of God, and the defiling of his own Soul. No! He knows they were design'd for instruments of Good, and he thinks himself strictly bound to apply them to their proper Use: He studies and delights to do good with them, and he finds his Pleasure in his Duty: And whatsoever of that kind [Eccles. 9. 10.] *his hand findeth to do, he doth it with all his might*, and without delay, lest he should be cramp'd in his Abilities, or miss of the Opportunity afterward. His Benevolence is universal, and glad would he be if his Liberality could be so too: but he extends it as far as it will go, and seeks out the most fit and observing Objects to place it upon? and contrives if it may be, to make it doubly beneficial, conducing to the Edification as well as Comfort of those that taste it, and salutary both to their Souls and Bodies. And this is a Tribute that he is constantly praying, out of Gratitude to his kind preserver and Benefactor, and in Expectation of his future Blessings. He knows indeed that [1 Cbro. 29. 14.] *All cometh*

*cometh of his Hand, and that he giveth him of his own*: But yet he humbly hopes that God is pleas'd with such Oblations, because they are of his own Appointment, and the best that we are capable of making; and because he has declared his Acceptance of them by the encouraging Promises annexed to them: Such as are these; [2 Cor. 9. 6.] *He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.* [Prov. 11. 18.] *He that soweth Righteousness shall have a sure Reward.* [Prov. 3. 9.] *Honour the Lord with thy Substance*; so shall thy Barns be filled with Plenty, and thy Presses shall burst out with new Wine, and the like.

Since therefore such a Man as this has the Pleasure of doing Good, which is the most agreeable of all Pleasures; since he has the complacency of discharging his Duty faithfully, and acting a grateful part towards his God, which is the serene of all Comforts; since he has such ample assurance of a Recompence proportionable to the Greatness of his Charity, and of the encrease of Blessings upon his Head, it must be own'd that the best enjoyment, the wisest Improvement of our worldly Wealth, consists in being thus rich towards God. And,

*Thirdly*, So it will be found to do more especially, if we look into the state of the Pious and Charitable Soul when he comes to die. For as he was not over-fond of Life, nor any of its Enjoyments, so he will not be exceedingly terrified at the appearance of Death: As he was not much enamour'd of any Earthly Good, so neither will it be extremely concern'd to part with them all. He will rather see Reason to rejoyce, whilst he is dispatching the last great Work of Self-examination, to find himself free from all Gripings and Pangs of Conscience about any unlawful Gains, and from all Doubts and Perplexities concerning a sufficient Restitution: Nay, he will perceive a secret Applause from within, and a sweet Consolation attending it, when upon serious recollection he finds, that it has been his habitual Practice to do good, and Communicate; that he has been incessantly employ'd in this Labour of Love; that he has liv'd to see the happy Fruits of it in some measure himself; and that he shall leave many living Monuments behind him (and perhaps some more durable than the Life



Life of Man) of his large and extensive Charity. And whilst he is entertaining himself with those Comfortable Reflections, he may look chearfully beyond the Grave, and safely reckon that he hath made so good a *Friend even of this false Mammon, as by means thereof to procure a Reception into everlasting Habitations*. Like the Merchant that Sojourns and Traffick in Foreign parts, but takes care by the degrees to send his effects into his own Country, where he intends at last to take up his settled Residence. And this sure must be allow'd to be the truest enjoyment of Wealth, that affords comfort when all other Earthly Comforts fail; this is the wisest improvement of it, that secures an Interest in Heaven: Which will be made good to the Righteous Soul experimentally, when,

*Fourthly and Lastly*, He comes to appear before God at the last great Audit, to give up his Accounts. For thither will the Testimony of a good Conscience, and the Acclamations and Prayers of the Poor and needy, the Fatherless and the Widow, accompany him, to be his Vouchers, that he was all along that wise and faithful Servant, who took care to give to every one of the Household their Portion of Meat in due Season, and in full measure; and his Lord also will vouchsafe to bear him Witness, that he himself at his coming found him so doing; And thereupon he will make him Ruler of all his Goods, and Partaker of his Joy.

And the same shall be the happy Lot of all those that go and do likewise: They shall all in their turns receive the welcome *Euge*, and hear the Voice of Christ with inconceivable Transport, saying, (*Mat. 25. 34, &c.*) *Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me Drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; Naked and ye clothed me; Sick and in Prison, and ye came unto me.* And tho' these Righteous Souls in an humble Sense of their own Defects, and the little Value of their Services should say Lord, when did we all this unto thee? This shall not deprive them of the Reward of a well-intended Charity: For the King shall answer them with marvellous Condescension, saying, *Verily I say unto you inasmuch*

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*as you have done it to the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*: He will graciously impute, accept, and reward it as done to himself. Which is such an exuberancy of Mercy, that it were enough, one wou'd think, to convince even an Earthly Mind of the excellency of Charity; and of the noble Improvement that he might make of his Wealth by depositing it with God, and exchanging for the never fading Joys and Glories of Heaven.

And thus I have endeavour'd briefly to make out what I at first propos'd more briefly indeed than such a copious Subject ought to have been handled; But as I was loth to make this Solemnity too tedious, so I am resolv'd not to mispend your time, nor abuse your Patience, by diverting to any thing that is perfectly foreign and unsuitable to the Occasion.

For what remains therefore, I must take the Liberty (in the *Apostle's* Name) to charge and most earnestly exhort *you that are rich in this world, that you be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches*, (which is all but folly and improvidence) *but in the living God, who giveth you all things richly to enjoy*. And, as the surest Token of your firm Trust in God, and the best Method of improving what you have, *that you do good; that you be rich in good Works; ready to distribute; willing to communicate; laying up in store for your selves a good foundation or security against the time to come; a Bank in Heaven, not of Merit, but of Mercy, which will yield you a hundred-fold for all that you bestow in Charity*.

And this Fund is always open; and you have the opportunity of making vast improvements now before you, as you will soon be convinc'd, if you cease to lend your Attention once more, whilst I read a true Report, &c. †.

You perceive (*Right Honourable and Worshipful*) that the Fund of Charity is still open, and God's Receivers are ready to take your Pious Contributions; and you have variety of Objects presenting themselves, all extremely well worthy of your Christian Consideration and Compassion.

In the first place, The Innocence of Childhood and Youth; as yet uncorrupted, pleads hard to be remov'd in time from the Contagion of ill Example; and to be receiv'd into your Schools, and Instructed and Educated there, and train'd up to Industry and Virtue; that so, in their degree, they may become profitable to the Common-Wealth, and capable in some measure, of recompensing this your well-plac'd Charity, either by their Faithfulness and Diligence in the quality of menial Servants to you at Home, or by their more Publick and Useful Services at Sea; and perhaps at last by grateful Benefactions to the Place of their Education.

Next, Decrepit Age bending under the weight of its own Infirmities, or worn out by hard Labour, and no longer able to sustain it self, craves some Support, some Comfort at your hands, only whilst it is creeping leisurely to the Grave, to find a Resting-place there.

† Here the several Reports were read of the present State of Christ's, St. Bartholomew's, St. Thomas's, Bridewell and Bechlechem Hospitals: As also of the newly Erected Corporation for Work-houses in the City and Liberties of LONDON.

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Then the Sorrow and Anguish which attends *Chronical Diseases*, and the Pains and Aches of the Maim'd and Wounded implore your Charitable help; that these Evils, grievous enough in themselves, may not thro' neglect become incurable, nor thro' Poverty insupportable.

Most especially, Those Maims and Wounds, and other Disasters, which are usually brought from the Wars, as the Marks of the poor Sufferer's Valour, and the Pledges of your own Safety, do justly challenge your tenderest Care and Concern. They challenge it, I say, of strictest Right: For it would be not only uncharitable, but heinously unjust and ungrateful, and even barbarous too, to neglect and desert them in their greatest Need, who have so gallantly defended you with the utmost Peril of their Lives, and the actual Loss of Health and Limbs; That Health, and those Limbs, which they have freely and even prodigally parted with, as the Ransom of those Estates, which you the mean while, under their *Safeguard*, have been securely Railing and Encroaching.

And, amongst all the rest, you cannot forget those most unhappy Wretches who are depriv'd of the Use of their Reason, through the Fumes of blackest Melancholy, or the Heat of raging Madness. Their deplorable Calamities cry aloud for your Commiseration, and the Physician's nicest Skill and wisest Conduct; as being so incapable of governing themselves, so unmanageable by their Friends, so unfit to be convers'd with, so uncomfortable to be seen indeed by the rest of Mankind.

*Lastly*, Audacious Lewdness that haunts your Streets by Night, and sturdy Idleness that burdens them by Day, do both bespeak and provoke that sort of Charity from you which is proper in their Case, *viz.* due Correction, and a Confinement to constant Labour; which is the readiest way you have to ease your selves of these Publick Nuisances.

You have here, Beloved, in this Catalogue various Methods and Opportunities of doing Good presented to your Choice; such as require a very large Stock and liberal Supplies; and are enough to meet with the good Inclinations of every well disposed Person.

And as Wise-men love to lay out their Money to the best Advantage; and Good men would be glad of all things, to see and be certain of the Success of what they bestow in Charity; so you have all possible Assurance; that what you give to any of the Charitable Foundations before referr'd to, is put into Honourable Hands, and carefully and wisely apply'd: And the Contributors may have the Satisfaction to see, and be sensible of the happy Fruits of their Charity, and to be themselves immediate Sharers in them.

Thus when you contribute towards the † Education of poor Children, who would otherwise be turn'd loose into a Wicked World, without so much as the Seeds of Vertue, or any Seasoning of good Manners, you do, in Effect, contribute to their Well-being, both here and hereafter; you promote the Honour of God, and the Interest of Religion; you set the

† Christ's Hospital and Work-houses.

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truest Step towards an orderly Reformation: And at the same time likewise Oeconomists, you breed up towardly Servants to your own Hands, and such as are likely to prove useful in their Generation; the Benefit of which redounds to the whole Community, and to your selves in particular, who are such considerable Members of it.

In like manner, when you contribute towards the Relief and Support of † Persons that are disabled by Sickness, Age, or Accident, or such as are oppress'd with Families, too numerous to be maintain'd with all their painful labour, you do most effectually encourage Honesty and Industry which is also advantageous both to your selves and to the Publick.

Thus again, when you contribute towards the Cure or Maintenance of poor Soldiers and Seamen, who return from fighting you Battles, sick, maimed, or wounded, you invite and animate others to enter chearfully into the Service of their Country; and thereby you establish your own Security. And so also, when you contribute towards the Recovery of such as are ‡ distemper'd in Mind as well as Body, you do what lies in you to preserve and restore those, who would perfectly be lost to themselves; and the World; nay, who would otherwise certainly annoy others, if not destroy themselves.

In fine, when you contribute to those most necessary \* Hospitals, that are appointed to entertain Idle Vagrants and disorderly Livers, to bow their Backs to Discipline and Labour, and to keep them confin'd for that purpose, you remove a great deal of Filth and Scandal from your Doors; you secure your selves in some measure from Thieves; and your Sons and Servants from that which is the too common Bane of Youth, the Enticement of shameless Prostitutes: you employ those hands honestly and usefully, which if left to themselves, would by one means or other find the way into your Pockets: In a Word, you save even these Profligates many times from infamous Deaths; sometimes possibly (by God's extraordinary Grace) from eternal Destruction.

And thus you have seen upon a Review of all these Particulars, that what is appropriated to such Charitable Uses, is Money well bestow'd, and well improv'd; and that the very Duty of Charity is of it self conducive to your Temporal Interest.

But these you must look upon (so far as they regard only Temporals) to be but prudential Considerations, and the lower sort of Motives. You have higher Prospects before you; the true Advantages of Charity are of a nobler kind, for it entitles you to all the choicest Blessings and Comforts that do either sweeten the Cares of this life, or crown the Happiness of the next.

O let not these precious Advantages slip out of your Hands [*Gal. 6. 9.*] *for in due Season ye shall reap, if ye faint not.* It will be thought no Upbraiding sure to tell you, that there are abundance of Riches in this

\* St. Bartholomew, and St. Thomas Hospitals. † Bethlem. ‡ Bridewell or the Work-houses.

great

great City; and that within this last 16 Years, even under the Burden of publick Taxes, besides other Obstructions, you have made a prodigious Increase, many of you, in your own private Fortunes. And yet you will listen to me, I hope if I take upon me to say, that they are still capable of greater and better Improvements: and the way is plainly chalk'd out to you in the foregoing Discourse. It is what I promise my self you will easily be perswaded to, to trust a good part of your superfluous Treasure there, where you are sure to have the largest Interest, as well as the most undoubted Security. *Be rich towards God.* Dedicate what you can well spare to Piety and Charity; so shall you best ensure the Possession, and sanctify the Enjoyment of all the rest to your selves: so may you humbly hope that the Providence of God will constantly watch over you for good; and carry out your Ships with Safety, and bring them home again laden with Plenty. But whatever measure of Prosperity God shall see fit to bless you with, you will be sure to taste his Goodness therewith and find the sweetest Relish in it: You will have the continual Feast of a good Conscience, to add Chearfulness to this and all other your Festivals: You will feel a most sensible Pleasure in doing good, for which God has given you such sufficient Abilities, and so many Opportunities; in answering the ends of your Creation, and pursuing the designs of his Providence; in being grateful to your best Benefactor, and faithful in the discharge of your Stewardships, and to him that is the Lord and Proprietor of the Universe.

You will reap much inward Consolation in [1 Cor. 7. 31.] *so using this World as not abusing it*, nor abusing your selves for the sake of it; which will prepare you to part with it too, as those that were never wedded to it, but always preparing for another. You will have the Satisfaction of leaving Estates honestly got and well employ'd, with an entail of Blessings upon your Posterity: And the equal Satisfaction of leaving a fragrant Memory and fruitful Example behind you too, which will cast a Light so very bright and shining before Men, that it will discover to them all the Beauties of Charity, and provoke them [Hebr. 10. 24.] *to Love and to good works*; and excite them to *glorify God* after so worthy and excellent a Pattern.

To conclude all: When these Earthly Tabernacles shall fail and moulder into Dust then, then most especially shall your Hearts be fill'd and rais'd with the joyful Expectation of being restor'd to Life and Immortality, and translated into those blissful Mansions, where Faith shall be turn'd into a Vision, and hope swallowed up in Fruition; but Charity shall still abide, exercised, exalted, and infinitely transported with Seeing, Enjoying, Admiring, Adoring and Loving that God, [1. Joh. 4. 8.] *who is Love*, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.





