



HERE BEGINNE

OTHER SEVEN MEDITA-

tions for the same seven daies in the nightes.
And althowghe these Meditations be placed in
the seconde place, yet are they first to be vsed
in the order of exercise: Forsomuch as with
them they must first beginne, that are but new-
lie converted to the seruice of almightie God.

MONDAIE NIGHTE.

*of the knowledge of our selues:
and of our synnes.*

THIS daie (after thou hast
made the signe of the
Crosse, and prepared thy
selfe hereunto,) thou must
attende to the knowledge
of thy selfe: and thou must
use diligence to call to minde thy synnes,
and offences. And this is the waie to obteine
trewe humilitie of harte, and repentance,
which are the two first gates, and founda-
tions of a Christian life.

For

For the better performance whereof, thou
must thinke first of all vpon the multitude
of the synnes of thy former lyfe, and espe-
cially vpon those offences, that thou diddest
commit, at what time thou haddest least
knowledge of almightie God. For if thou
canst well vewe, and examyne them, thou
shalt finde, that they haue exceeded in nom-
ber the verie hayres of thy heade, and that
thou diddest liue at that time like an hea-
then, that knoweth not what God is.

This done, runne ouer breeflie the tenne
commaundementes, and the seven deadlie
synnes, and thou shalt see, that there is no
one of them, wherein peradventure thou
hast not offended more, or lesse, diuers and
sundry times, by thought, worde, or deede.
Our first father Adam did eate but of one
onely tree forbidden him, when he commit-
ted the greatest sinne of the world: But thou
hast set thy eies, and handes infinite times
vpon all synnes.

In like maner runne ouer all the bene-
fites of almightie God, and all the times of
thy life past, & consider wherein thou hast
employed them: forsomuche as thou must
vndowtedlie geue an accompte at the verie
hower of thy deathe of all these things.
And therefore it were well done, that thou
shouldest first take an accompte of thine
owne doynges, and enter into iudgement
with thy selfe, that thou be not afterwarde
iudged of almightie God.

B. 2.

I.
*Of the
multitude
of the syn-
nes of thy
former
life.*

Genes. 3.

*How thou
hast vsed
the bene-
fites of al-
mightie
God.*
Matth. 12.
v.
H

Of myf-
spendinge
thy time.

Of the
bodely
fences and
powers of
the foule.

Wherefore tell me nowe, wherein hast thou spent thy childehoode? Wherein thy infancie? Wherein thy youth? To be short, wherein hast thou spent all the daies of thy lyfe past? Wherein hast thou occupied thy bodely senses, & the powers of thy soule, which almightie God hath geuen thee, to this ende, that thou shouldest knowe him, & serue him? Wherein hast thou employed thine eies, but in beholdinge of vanities? Wherein thine eares, but in harkening after lies? Wherein thy tonge, but peradventure in all kinde of swearing, backbyinge, and most vn honest talke? Wherein hast thou occupied thy tast, thy smelling, and thy touchinge, but onely in pleasures, and delites, and in sensuall, and fleshly allurementes? What benefite hast thou taken by the Sacramentes, which almightie God hath ordeyned for thy remedie, & comforte? How thankfull hast thou bene vnto him for his benefites? Howe hast thou answered vnto his inspirations? Wherein hast thou spent thy healthe, thy naturall forces, & habilites? Howe hast thou employed the goodes, which are tearmed the goodes of fortune? How hast thou vsed the meanes and oportunities, which almightie God hath geuen thee to leade a holie, and vertuous lyfe? What care hast thou had of thy neighbour, whom almightie God hath commended vnto thee? And of those workes of mercie, which he hath appointed thee

to vse

to vse towards him? Now what answer wilt thou make at that dreadfull daie of thyne accompte, (to wit, at the hower of thy deathe,) when almightie God shal saie vnto thee. *Gene me an accompte of thy stewardshippe,* and of the landes, and goodes, that I haue committed to thy charge: For now I will that thou shalt haue no more to doe therewith? O drye and withered tree, readie for the euerlastinge horrible tormentes in hell fier! What answer wilt thou make at that terrible daie, when an accompte shalbe required of thee, of all the time of thy life, and of all the minutes, and momentes of the same?

And assure thy selfe, that it wil so certainlie come to passe: for euen our Sauour Christ himself (who shalbe our Iudge) hath plainlie protested it, & forwarned vs beforehand thereof: sayenge: *Euerie idell worde that men haue spoken, they shall render an accompte of the same at the daye of Iudgement.*

Secondly, call to mynde what sinnes thou hast committed, and doest commit euerie daie, since the tyme thou art come to a further knowledg of almightie God. And thou shalt finde that euen now presently (all that knowledge notwithstanding) olde Adam liueth in thee, with manie of thy lewde corrupt maners, & auncient customes. Wherevpon thou mayest take occasion to runne ouer the negligences, and defectes, wherein thou doest daile offend against almightie

Luc. 16.
vers 2.

Mat. 12. 36

II.
Of the
sinnes that
thou hast
committ-
ed, since
the time
thou wast
born

B 3

God, against thy neighbour, & against thy selfe. For in each of these pointes, thou shalt fynde thy selfe to haue failed verie much in thy dutie. Consider then how vnreuerent thou arte towards almightie God: howe vnthankfull for his benefites: how rebellious, and stife-necked to yeelde to his inspirations: how slouthfull, and negligent in matters appertaininge to his seruice: which either thou hast left vndone, or els if thou hast done them, it was not with suche a readines, and diligence, as the thinges required, nor with such a pure intention as thou oughtest to haue had: but the verie true cause why thou diddest them, was for some other respecte of worldlie commoditie.

Consider likewise, how harde and seuerer thou art towards thy neighbour: and contrariwise howe pittiefull and fauorable towards thy selfe: what a louer of thyne owne proper will, of thy fleashe, of thy estimation, and of all thy worldly profites, and commodities. Consider moreouer, that whereas thou sayest in wordes, that thou arte now conuerted vnto almightie God, thou art yet notwithstanding in thy deedes very proude, ambitious, angrie, rashe, vaine-glorious, enuious, malitious, delicate, inconstant, light, sensual, a great louer of thy pastymes, of pleasante companie, laughter, iestyng, idell talke, and of vaine bablyng, and pratlinge. Consider also, how vnconstant

thou

thou art in thy good purposes: how vnadvised in thy woordes: how headlonge in thy deedes: how cowardly, and faynte harted to do anie matter of weight, & importance.

Thirdly, when thou hast considered in this order the multitude of thy sinnes, consider forthwith the greiuousnes of them, that thou mayest perceaue how thy miseries be increased on euerie side. The whiche thinge thou shalt the better see, if thou consider these three circumstances in all such sinnes, as thou hast committed in thy former lyfe: to witt: Against whom thou hast sinned: For what cause thou hast sinned: And in what maner thou hast sinned: If thou consider against whom thou hast sinned, thou shalt finde that thou hast sinned against almightie God, whose goodnes and maiestie is infinite: whose benefittes and mercies towards mankinde doe exceede the sandes of the Sea: in whom alone are all excellencies, and titles of honour to be fownde: and to whom all dueties and homagies dewe to anie creature, are due in the highest degree of bounden dewtie. If thou consider the cause that moued thee to sinne, it was for a poynte of estimation, for a beastly delight, for a trifeling worldly commoditie, & for other thinges of no weight: whereof almightie God himselfe most greiuously complaineth by one of his Prophettes, saiege: *They haue dishonored me, in the presence of my people, for a handful of barlie, & for a peece of breade.* But if

III.
Of the
greuous-
nes of
sinne.
Three cir-
cumstan-
ces to be
considered
in sinne.

I.

II.

thow consider after what maner thou hast sinned? Suerlie it hath bene done with such facilitie, with such boldnes, so without all scruple, so without al feare, yea some times with such contentation, and ioye, as if thou haddest sinned against a God of strawe, that neither knewe, nor sawe, what passed in the worlde. Now is this the honour that is due vnto so highe a maiestie? Is this the thanckfulnes that thou yeeledest for his so manifolde, and so great benefits? Is this the recompence that thou makest vnto him for the pretious blood, which he hath shed for thee vpon the crosse? Is this the repaiment for those lashes, & buffettes, which he suffered for thy sake? O miserable and wretched creature that thou art! Wretched vndowredlie in consideration of that thou hast lost: and more wretched in respect of the sinnes thou hast committed: but most wretched, and miserable, if thou be so blynded, that euen yet for all this thou perceauest not thyne owne perdition, and damnation.

I I I.

Consider moreouer what a wonderfull hatred almightie God beareth against sinne: and what great punnishmentes he hath sent to the worlde for the same: that hereby thou mayest more clearlie vnderstande, how great, and how abhominable the wickednes thereof is, as it shalbe declared hereafter.

When thou hast considered all these thinges aforesayd, the next poynte is, that

thou

thou thinke of thy selfe as basely, as thou canst possibly. Thinke that thou art no better than a verie waueringe reede, which is blowen vp and downe with euerie light blast of wynde: without weight, without strengthe, without firmenes, without staie, and without anie maner of beinge. Thinke that thou art a Lazarus, that hath lyen dead fowre daies together, and that thou art a stynkinge and abhominable carcas, so full of wormes, and of so vyle a stentche, and sauour, that as manie as passe by thee doe stoppe their noses, and shutte their eies, that they maye not beholde thee. Thinke with thy selfe, that thou doest styncke in this wise in the sight of almightie God, and of his holie angels. And esteeme thy selfe, as vnworthy to lift vp thy eies towardes heauen: vnworthy that the earth should beare thee: vnworthie that anie creature shoulde serue thee: vnworthie of the verie breade that thou eatest: & vnworthie euen of the light, and aier, that thou receauest. And if thou be vnworthie hereof: consider how much more vnworthie thou art to speake & talke with almightie God: yea and farre more vnworthie of the comfortes and consolations of the holie Ghost, and of the cheryshinges, and delightes of the children of God. Accompte thy selfe for one of the most poore, and miserable creatures of all the worlde: and that none doth so much abuse the benefites of almightie God, as thou doest.

*we must
thinke verie
baselie
of our
selues.*

Ioan. 11.

*Luc. 15.
Luc. 18.*

Marc. 11.

Thinke that if almightie God had wrought in Tire, and Sidon, (thar is, in other verie great sinners) those things, which he hath wrought in thee, they woulde haue done penance ere this, euen in sackclothe, and ashes. Acknowledge thy selfe to be farre more wicked than thou canst imagin, and that notwithstandinge thou doest sincke verie deepe into this myer, and howsoeuer thou imaginest thy selfe to be at the verie bottome, yet maist thou fynde euerie daye how to sincke deeper and deeper therein. Crie out therefore earnestlie vnto almightie God, and saie vnto him: O Lorde I haue nothinge, I am worthe nothinge, I am nothinge, and nothinge can I doe without thee. Cast thy selfe downe prostrate with the publike sinner at our Sauours feete, and coueringe thy face for verie shame, & confusion, looke with what shame a woman wil appeare before her husbände, when she hath comitted treason, & adulterie against him, with the verie same presente thy selfe before that heauenlie spouse, against whom thou hast comitted so manie, and so shamefull adulteries. And with greate sorrowe, and repentance of hart, desire him to pardon thy synnes, & offences, and that it maye please him of his infinite pittie, and mercie, to receiue thee againe into his howse.

Luc. 7.

THE

THE FIRST TREATISE:

*of the consideration of synnes.
wherein this former meditation
is declared more
at lardge.*



HE first table after shipwracke, (as S. Ierome witnesseth) is penance. This is the first steppe of this ascending, and the first stone of this spirituall buildinge.

Now to obtaine this vertue of penance, (besides the grace of God, whose gifte true penance is,) it helpeth verie much to consider the multitude of our sinnes, as well present, as past: and withall the greiuousnes and malice of them. For of this consideration proceedeth compunction, and repentance for synnes.

And out of this consideration proceedeth not onely the vertue of penance, but also manie other vertues, yea & those verie excellent. For hereof commeth the knowledge of our selues, (of which pointe we minde to treat in the meditation nexte following.) Of this consideration also cometh the contempt of our selues: the feare of God: the abhorring of sinne: with diuers & sundrie other like affections, wherein consisteth a verie greate parte of perfection. Nowe

that this exercise maie be the more profitable vnto thee, thou must applie and direct the same vnto all these endes: and labour to sucke all these sweite fruites out of the bitter roote of this consideration. But because towards the obteyninge of such fruites, it is nedefull to haue the grace of God, (which is principallie geuen to such as be humble, and deuoute,) it shalbe requisite for thee, to desire of our Lorde this gifte of humilitie, and deuotion, to the ende that recollectinge thy selfe in the inwarde parte of thy harte, thou mayest imitate that holie kinge, who said: *I will recite before thee o Lord, all the yeares of my life, in the bitternes of my harte.*

Esaye. 38.

OF THE MVLTIPLITUDE
of the synnes, that thou hast committed in thy former life.

§. I.

Now if thou wilt knowe the number of thy synnes, that thou hast committed in tymes past, runne ouer brieffli al the commaundementes, & deadly synnes: and vndoubtedly thou shalt finde, that there is scarcely a commaundemente, that thou hast not broken, nor a deadly synne, wherein thou hast not offended.

The

The first commaundemente is to honor almightie God, who (as S. Augustine saith) is honored with those three Theological vertues: FAITH: HOPE: AND CHARITIE. Now what maner of Faith had he, that hath liued so loosely, as if he had beleued that al those thinges which his faith teacheth him had bene starke lyes? What Hope had he, that neither remembred the life to come: neither knewe what it was to call vpon almightie God in his troubles, and aduersities: nor yet how to put his assured trust, and affiance in him? What Charitie had he, that hath more loued a pointe of honor, more accompted of the chaffe of his worldly lucre, and commoditie, and more regarded the filthines of his pleasures, and delightes, than almightie God him selfe: syth that for euerie one of these thinges he hath contened, & offended almightie God. What reuerence hath he borne to that most highe, and diuine maiestie, that hath bene accustomed to rente that name of so great reuerence, and to teare it in peeces, in swearing, and forsweringe by it vpon euerie lighte occasion, and that for euerie trifle, & matter of none importance? How hath he sanctified and kepte holie his Feastes, that hath gaped for these daies to none other ende, but onely to offende almightie God the more in them: to vse dyslinge, cardinge, playenge at tables, bowlinge, and other games: to iette and gafe vp and downe in the

Of breake-
kinge the
commaun-
dementes.

Faith.

Hope.

Charitie.

Of reue-
rence vnto
almightie
God.Of swearin-
ge, & for-
swerynge.Of
obse-
rue
the
daye
holi
daye

streetes: to geue scandall and offence to innocent yonge maydens, and virgins: and to kepe euill companie, and conuersation?

After this, consider how frowarde, and obstinate thou hast bene towards thy parentes? How disobedient to thy superiors: How negligent in ouerseinge thy familie, and seruantes, to instructe them in Catholike doctrine, and prayers: to traine them vp in honestie, vertue, and goodnes: & to direct them with thy good counsell, & vertuous example, in the waye of God? As for the hatreds, displeasures, grudges, passions, and desires of reuenge, which thou hast had, who is able to nomber them? And if these things cannot fully be expressed, who is then able to declare the number of the dishonesties, & vncleannes, wherein thou hast fallen by workes, wordes, and desires? What hath thy harte bene, but a filthie puddle, and stynking dungehill, meete for beastly swyne? What hath thy mouth bene, but (as the Prophet saith) An open sepulchre, from whence haue issued the euill sauours of thy soule, that lye dead within thee? What hath thyne eies bene, but as it were certaine windowes of perdition, and deathe? What thinge hath bene presented to the sighte of thyne eies, that thou hast not coueted, and procured, neuer so much as once remembre that almightie God was present, and lookinge vpon thee, and that he had geuen thee an inhibition that thou shouldest not taste of

that

Psal. 5.

that tree? Vnto the fornicator (the Wise man saith) all bread is sweete. Because his appetite, and griedie desire is so vnsaciable, that he tasteth all thinges, and fyndeth sauer in all thinges, neuer remembre that there is a God vnto whom he must be accomptable for them. Moreouer, who is able to declare the greatnes of thy couetousnes, and the robberies, and theftes of thy desires, which haue bene so farre of from beinge contented with that, that almightie God hath geuen thee, that all the whole worlde hath seemed to litle for them. And if he that desireth an other mans landes, or goodes, be (as in verie deede he is,) a verie theyfe in the sight of almightie God, how often times hast thou deserued to be hanged, that in thy harte hast committed so manie theftes? Now as towching thy lyes, thy backbitinges, and rashe iudgements, as hardly maye they be nombred, as the rest. For in a maner thou neuer haddest scarcely communication with others, but that the principall parte of thy talke hath bene of other folkes liues, of the widowe, of the virgin, of the preist, and of the laie man, without sparinge any order or estate whatsoever.

After this sorte hast thou obserued the commaundmentes of almightie God. Let vs now see how thou hast restrained thy selfe from sinne. The pride of thy harte, how great hath it bene: Thy desire of honor, & praise, how farre hath it extended? Thy presumption,

Eccles. 23.

*How thou
hastre-
frayne
from
sinne.*

thy estimation of thy selfe, and thy contempt of others, who is able to expresse: Now what shall I saie of the vaine glorie, & lightnes of thy harte, sith that euen a light fether in thy cappe, or a strait payre of hose on thy legges, or a garde of veluet vpon thy cloke, or a fewe silke cuttes, and iaggies, haue bene able to make thee to strowe, iette, and aduaunce thy selfe verie proudly, fondlie, and peacocklike in the streetes? yea, and to make thee desirous to be gased vpon of al men? What steppes hast thou made, what worke hast thou done, what worde hast thou spoken, that hath not bene set forthe with vanitie, and desire of thine owne estimation? Thy apparell, thy seruice, thy conuersation, thy table, thy bedde, thy enterteynmente, to be short in a maner all thy dealinges, and demayneure, haue sauored of pryde, yea, they haue bene whollie clothed with mere vanitie. Furthermore, thy anger hath bene like a Serpent: thy glotonie, like a raueninge woulfe: thy slouth, like a lasie Asse: thy enuie, farre passinge anie viper: And herein finallie (if thou doe well consider thy selfe,) thou shalt finde that thou hast gone verie farre wanderinge out of the waye, & liued in a verie dangerous state.

my
thy
es
and
fittes
migh-
od.

Consider likewise of thy senses, and not onely of them, but also of all the giftes, graces, and benefites, that almighty God hath geuen thee. And consider after what sort

thou hast employed them, and vndowtedlie thou shalt finde, that of all these thinges, (wherewith thou shouldest haue done the more seruice vnto him, who is the geuer of them all,) thou hast made weapons, and instrumentes, wherewithall to offende him the more. Herein hast thou consumed thy strength, thy healtie, thy substance, thy lyfe, thy vnderstandinge, thy memorie, thy will, thy sight, thy tonge, with all the rest.

These and manie other worse wicked actes hast thou committed in thy lyfe past. Wherefore thou mayest verie well saie with that great synner, (who as he was a great synner, so was he also a repentant synner,) *I haue sinned (O Lorde) above the number of the sandes of the sea: my transgressions (O Lorde) are multiplied, my offences are exciedinge manie.* And whereas there were so manie thinges, that might somewhat haue bridleed thee, and made thee afraid of almighty God: as the multitude of his benefites: and his exceedinge great goodnes, and iustice: yet for all his benefites thou wouldest neuer acknowledge him, nor for his goodnes loue him, nor for his iustice feare him, but vtterlie forgettinge all these thinges, and closinge fast thyne eies from beholdinge the, as one that had bene starke blinde, thou hast wilfullie wallowed thy selfe in all kinde of vices. Now if it had so bene, that the commodities, and prouocations, thou haddest to allure thee to sinne

2. Para. 36

had bene great, then peradventure thyne offences might haue had some pretended colour of excuse. But what canst thou saye for thy selfe, seinge that euen for triflinge matters of no importance, for childishe toyes, yea manie times without anie commoditie at al, thou hast voluntarilie sinned, as it were onelie in mere contempt, and despite of almighty God? Other men when they sinne, are wonte to doe it with some feare, and remorse of conscience, or at the least after the synne is committed they are verie sorie for it. But thou perhappes hast bene so blynde, and so vn sensible, that thou hast committed a thousande sinnes without anie kinde of feare, or remorse of conscience, euen as if thou haddest thought that there had bene no God at al. Or if thou haddest believed that there was a God, yet thy beliefe was like vnto theirs, that sayed. *Our Lorde shall not see our doinges, neither shall the God of Iacob vnderstande them.* This is one of the greatest wickednes in all the worlde. For emonge those fixe things, which (as Salomon sayeth) are abhorred of almighty God, one is: *To haue swifte feete to runne to doe wickednes:* That is: to haue a facilitie, & swiftnes, which the wicked haue in offendinge almighty God.

Psalm. 93.

Prouer. 6.

OF

OF THE SINNES, AND DEFECTES, THAT A MAN MAIE
*fall into after he is come to the knowledge
 of almighty God.*

§. II.

IN these and manie other sinnes it is certaine thou hast fallen before thou knewest almighty God. But after thou diddest come to the knowledge of him, (if happlie thou hast yet knowen him,) desire him that he will a litle open thine eis, and thou shalt fynde that euen still for all this knowledge there are manie reliques of the olde man, & manie Iebusees yet remayninge in the lande of promise: because thou hast delt so fauorably with them, & hast bene so well affected towards them.

*Iosua. 15.
 Indic. 1.*

Consider then how in al things thou art full of defectes, to witt: in thy ductie towards God, towards thy neighbour, & towards thy selfe. Consider how litle thou hast profited in the seruice of thy creator, beinge so longe a time as it is, since he called thee. Consider how liuely thy passions are euen yet to this daye: How litle thou hast encreased in vertues: And how thou hast cōtinewed euermore at one same staie, euen like vnto an olde knottie tree, that neuer thryueth, but rather perhappes thou hast

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*The not
goinge
forwarde
in the
waie of
God, is a
tourninge
backe-
wardes.*

tourned backwarde: Forso much as in the waie of God, the not goinge forwarde is a tourning backwarde. At the least wise consider as towching thy seruour, and deuotion of spirite. Is it well (trowest thou) that thou arte now verie farre of from that seruient deuotion, which peraduenture thou hast had in tymes past?

Consider also, how litle penance thou hast done for thy sinnes, and how litle loue, feare, and hope, thou hast had in almighty God. Thy litle loue towardes him is seene by the litle paines thou hast taken for his sake. Thy litle feare of him is perceaued by the manifold sinnes thou hast committed against him. Thy litle confidence, & trust in him, is euidently declared in the tyme of tribulation, by the great raging stormes, and troubles of minde, which thou sufferedst in that tēpest, for that thou hast not perfectly staied and settled thy hart with the ankers of hope.

Ephes. 4.

Furthermore, consider how euil thou hast answered to his diuine inspirations: how vnwilling thou hast shewed thy selfe to receaue the light of heauen: how thou hast grieved the holie Ghost, and sufferest him to crie and call vpon thee so often tymes in vaine. For in that thou art lothe to gaine saie and resist thine owne will, thou doest gaynsaye & resist the wil of almighty God. He calleth thee to one waie, and thou followest an other. He woulde haue thee to

serue

serue him in one worke, & thou wilt serue him in an other worke. And although thou seest clearlie what the will of almighty God is: yet if happely thyne owne will be set on the contrarie, thou seruest him in such thinges, as thyne owne will lyketh, and not in such thinges as he woulde haue thee to serue him. He peraduenture calleth thee to inwarde exercises, and thou turnest to those that be outwarde. He calleth thee to praier, and thou geuest thy selfe to readinge. His will is that thou shouldest first attende to thyne owne soules healthe before anie others: but thou forgettest thy selfe, and settest asyde thine owne profite to profite others. Whereupon it cometh to passe, that thou neither doest profite thy selfe, nor them. To conclude, as often as thy will is contrarie to the will of almighty God, thyne alwaies preuaileth, & is the conquerour, and the will of almighty God hath the ouerthrowe.

And if perhappes thou doe anie good worke, (good Lorde,) how manie defectes are there intermingled therein? Yf thou be geuen to praier, how often times art thou there distracted, heauie, irksome, drowfie, and slouthfull, without anie reuerence to the maiestie of almighty God, vnto whom thou speakest. And thou thinkest the tyme of praier verie longe, & tedious vnto thee, & art neuer in quiet vntill thou hast geuen it ouer, that thou mayest attende to thy other

*vnto his
will, and
not accor-
dinge to
our owne
will.*

*How to
examine
the defec-
tes and
imperfec-
tions of
thy good
workes.*

busines, that be more agreable to thy taste, and liking. Now when thou doest anie other good worke, o with what coldnes and faintnes is it done? With how manie defectes and imperfections is it fraughted? If this be certaine, that almightie God looketh not so muche vnto the substance of the good worke that is done, as to the intention wherewith it is done, how manie good workes (I praie thee, hast thou done in suche sorte, as they passed awaie pure and cleane from dust, and chaffe: and that neither vanitie, nor the worlde haue plucked at the least one locke of wolfe from them? How manie hast thou done moued onely by the importunitie of others, or for custome, or maners sake? How manie hast thou done onely in regarde of thine owne estimation, and credit? How manie for the pleasinge and lykinge of men? How manie onely to satisfie thine owne taste, and contentation? And how fewe hast thou done sincerelie and purelie for the loue of God, without hauinge some kinde of vaine respect to the worlde?

*Of thy
dewtie to-
wardes
neigh-*

Now if thou consider how thou hast done thy duetie towards thy neighbours, thou shalt finde, that thou hast neither loued them as almightie God commaundeth thee, nor bene sorie for their aduersities as for thine owne, nor endeouored to helpe them in their troubles, neither yet hast thou had so much as euen pittie and compassion

vpon

vpon them: yea peradventure in steede of takinge cōpassion vpon them, thou hast disdayned & grudged at their doinges, though it be certaine that true iustice taketh pittie, & compassion, and false & counterfeite iustice disdayne, & indignation. At the least as touching that bond of loue which the Apostle so often tymes requireth of vs, cōmaunding vs to loue one an other, as members of one same bodie, (sith we be al partakers of one same spirit) consider how farre of thou hast bene from hauinge that loue? How often tymes hast thou omitted to relieue the poore, to visite the sicke, to helpe the widowe, and to be a proctor & mediator for him, that coulde do verie litle for himselfe? Vnto how manye persons hast thou geue offence with thy wordes, with thy deedes, & with thy answers? How oftē times hast thou preferred thy selfe before thy equales, dispised thy inferiours, and flattered thy superiours, crouching, and creepinge downe like a seeie emmet to the one sorte, and strowtinge, and aduancinge thy selfe verie prowdlie like an Elephant to the others?

But now if thou wilt take a vewe of thy selfe, and put thy hande into thine owne bosome, o how leperouse shalt thou plucke it out againe? & what deepe festered woundes shalt thou finde within thee? How greine and liuelie shalt thou finde within thee the rootes of pride, the loue of honor, & estimation, the tycklinge of vaine glorie,

*Trem
Iustice taketh
compassion,
and false
Iustice in-
dignation.
Ephes. 4.*

and hypochresie priuclie dissembled, where-
with thou labourest to couer thy defectes, &
wouldest gladly seeme to be an other maner
of man, than in verie deede thou arte? What
a louer arte thou of thine owne wordlie
gaine, & commoditie, and of the pleasures,
and delightes of thy fleshe? Whereunto
often tymes vnder the colour of necessitie,
thou doest not only prouyde, but also serue:
thou doest not onely sustein it, but also
pamper & cherishe it with great delicacie.
Againe, if one of thine equalles doe but take
the right hand of thee, or set his foote som-
what before thee, or sit about thee at the ta-
ble, howe quickly doe the rootes of envie
bud forth, and shewe themselves? And if
an other doe but a litle touche thee in a
poynte of estimation (good Lorde) what a
sodaine, and furious cholericke rage doest
thou falle into.

+ Envie.

But emonge al other euills, who is able to
expresse the losenes of thy tonge, the light-
nes of thy harte, the stubbornes of thine
owne will, & thy inconstancie in good pur-
poses? How manie waste, and voide wordes
doe issue from thy tonge? How much vaine
and needles language doest thou fondlie
laush out in a daie? How much doest
thou bable and talke to the derogation and
hinderance of thy neighbour, and to the
praise & commendation of thy selfe? How
seldome tymes dost thou denye thine owne
will, and geue ouer the praie whereupon it

feedeth.

feedeth, to fulfill eyther the will of almigh-
tie God, or of thy neighbour? Consider this
point attentiuely, and thou shalt fynde that
it is verie rare and seldome that thou hast
obteyned the victorie ouer thy selfe, and
thyne owne peruerse will. Whereas in very
deede it is alwaies necessarie for thee to
haue this victorie, in case thou minde to be
perfectly vertuous. Now what shall I saie
of thy inconstancie in thy good purposes,
but (to conclude in fewe wordes,) that there
is no wethercocke that so lightlie turneth
with euerie wynde, as thou doest with the
least puffe of euerie tryflinge occasion, that
is offered vnto thee? What els is all thy
whole lyfe but verie childishe toies, and as
it were a weauinge, and vnweauinge, pur-
posing a thinge in the morninge, and brea-
kinge it at eueninge, yea and some times
thou tariest not so longe, but changest and
alterest thy determinations, if not out
of hande, yet the verie same howre? Nowe
what other thinge is this, but to be like vn-
to that Lunatike man mentioned in the
gospell, whom the disciples of our Sauour
coule not heale, for that this disease was
so great.

In like maner the lightnes of thy harte,
the fickelnes, mutabilitie, vnstedfastnes, and
puslanimitie thereof are such, as they can
as hardlye be expessed. For it is manifest,
that thy hart chaungeth and varieth into so
many diuers shapes, and formes, as there

*It is neces-
sarie to
haue the
victorie
ouer our
selues, if
we mynde
to be per-
fectlie
vertuous.*

Math. 17.

D. d

chaunceth diuers occasions and accidentes vnto it euerie howre of the daie and that without anie firmenes or constancie at all. Howe soone is it distracted with euerie triflinge busines? How lyghtely powreth it out all that it hath? And how litle trouble and aduersitie is able to vex and torment it, yea and vtterly to ouerwhelme it?

To conclude, when thou hast well examined and made thine accompt arighte, & seest what thou hast, & what thou wantest, thou shalt surely finde, that thou hast good cause to be afrayed, least all that thou hast be but onely a verie deceit, and a mere shadowe of vertue, and euen a false and counterfeite iustice: forsomuche as thou hast no more in thee, but a litle taste of almightie God, which maie perhappes fauour more of the flesh, than of the spirite. And yet it maye so be, that herewith thou thinkest thy selfe to be safe, and secure: yea peraduenture thou wilt not sticke to saie with the proude Pharasie: *That thou art not as osher men be*: Because they haue not that taste and feelinge that thou hast. Whereas on the other side, thou hast the bosome of thy soule full of selfe loue, and of thine owne obstinate will, and of all the other fowle defectes, and inordinate passions before mentioned. So that all the substance of this thy gaye shewe of vertue, and goodnes, is no more in effecte, but to saie, Lorde! Lorde! and not to doe the will of our Lorde. This is to imitate the

counterfeite

Luc. 18.

counterfeite Iustice of the Pharasies, and to be that lukewarme man, (to witt, neither hoate nor cold in the seruice of God,) which is spoken of in the Apocalipes, whom almightie God vometeth out of his mowthe.

Apocal. 3

All these thinges (Christian brother) thou oughtest to consider verie diligently with thy selfe, and to direct this consideration to this ende, that thou mayest hereby procure sorrowe, and griefe for thy sinnes, and atteyne to the knowledge of thyne owne miserie: that by the one thou mayest desire pardon of our Lord for thine offences past: and by the other vertue, and grace, neuer to offende him anie more.

OF THE ACCVSATION

*of a mans owne conscience: And of
the abhorringe and contempte
of him selfe.*

§. III.

WHEN a man hath thus considered the multitude of his sinnes, & seene himselfe how he is on euerie syde verie sore laden, and ouercharged with the burthen of the same, his part is to humble himselfe, and to haue as great a sorrowe and compunction as he maie possiblye,

D. 2

and to desire to be contemned, and despised of all creatures, for that he hath thus despised the creator of them all. For the furtherance of which desire he maye helpe him selfe with a verie deuout consideration of S. Bonauenture, wherein speakinge of this confusion of conscience, and of the contempt of our selues, he saith thus.

Luc. 18.

1. Cor. 11.

Let vs consider my brethern our owne great vilenes, and how greatlie we haue offended almightie God, and let vs humble our selues before him, as much as we can possibly: let vs be affrayde to lift vp our eies towards heauen, & let vs strike our brestes with that publican of the gospel, that almightie God maye take pittie and compassion vpon vs: let vs enforce our selues, and take armes against our owne malice and wickednes: let vs become iudges ouer our selues: and let euerie one of vs saie within himselfe: If our Lord hath bene so reprochfullie handeled for my sake, if he haue suffered so great tormentes and most grievous paynes for the sinnes that I haue committed, why shoulde not I abase and despise my selfe, beinge the verie person that hath synned? God forbid, that I shoulde ever presume anie thinge more of my selfe than of a most vyle, and filthie dongehill, whose horrible stench euen I my selfe cannot well abide. I am he that hath despised almightie God: I am he, that hath sought meanes to crucifie him againe vpon the crosse: and me

thinketh

thinketh that all the whole frame of this worlde crieth out with open voice against me: sayenge: This is he, that hath offended and despised our comon Lorde. This is that wicked and vngatefull wretched creature that hath rather bene moued with the guylfull baies of the deuill, than with the greates benefites of almightie God. This is he, that hath bene more delighted with the malice of the deuill, than with the bountiefull goodnes and fauour of almightie God. This is he, that coulde neuer be induced to vertue and goodnes with the fatherlie louinge cherishinges, & entertaynmentes of almightie God: neither coulde he euer be made affrayed with his dreadfull and terrible iudgementes. This is he, that hath (so muche as lyeth in him) defaced the power, wisdom, and goodnes of almightie God, and brought them in contempt. This is he, that hath bene more affraide to offende a feeble weake man, than the omnipotencie of God. This is he, that hath bene more ashamed to commit a filthie acte before a rude plough man of the countrey, than before the presence of almightie God. This is he, that hath rather loued, and chosen to enioye a litle stinckinge donge and myre here vpon the earth, than the euerlastinge cheefe felicitie in the kingdome of heauen. This is he, that hath fixed his eies vpon rotten, and corruptible creatures, and vterlie neglected the creator. What shall I saie more? There is

D 3

nothinge so filthie, nothinge so abominable, that he hath refrayned to commit in the presence of almightie God, without hauing anie respect, or shame, of so greate a maiestie.

Wherefore all creatures doe crie out after their maner against me, and saie: This is that leude Caitiffe, that hath abused vs all. For whereas he owght to haue employed vs in the seruice and glorie of our Creator, he hath made vs to serue the will and pleasure of the deuill, peruertinge all such thinges to the iniurie, and reproche of the creator, as he had created for his seruice. His soule was beawtified with the image of God, and he hath disfigured this diuine image, and clothed it with our vyle image, and likenes. He hath bene more earthlie than the earthe it selfe: more slipperie than the water: more mutable than the wynde: more enkenneled in his appetites, than the fire: more hardened than the verie stones: more cruell against him selfe, than the wylde beasts: more spiteful and venemous against others, than the verie Cockatrice. What neede I to vse manie wordes? He hath neither feared almightie God, nor made accompte of men, and therefore he hath cast abroad his poyson (as much as in him laie) vpon manie persones, alluringe them to beare him company in his synnes, & wickednes. He hath not bene contente to be him selfe alone iniurious, and reprochefull against almightie

God,

punishments do runne vpon me on euerie side, so that by them I maie be brought to my most sweete, and mercifull Lorde. And as for al honour, pleasure, and delighe, they shal be bannished awaie quyte from me: in so much as the verie names of them shal no more be heard in my howse. In all thinges I will seeke nothinge els, but onely the honor of my Lorde God, and the contempte and confusion of my selfe.

Hetherto are the wordes of S. Bonauenture. Which will vndoutedlie be a very great helpe vnto him, that shal deuoutlie meditate vpon them, to procure, and ingender in him these fower noble affections. To wit, sorowe for sinne: the feare of God: a holic hatred of him selfe: and a desire to be contemned & despised for gods sake. Of the first affection proceedeth penance, which washeth awaie all our synnes past. In the seconde is cōteined the feare of God, which excludeth all sinnes that are to come. By the thirde is obtained a hatred of him selfe, against the loue of him selfe. And by the fourth is obtained true humilitie, against the desire of the glorie of the worlde. Whosoever is desirous to obtaine these fower vertues, must exercise him selfe in these, & such like considerations. But especiallie hereby is obtained this holic hatred of a mans selfe, whose office is, not onely to eschewe the cherishinges, and delicacies of the bodie, & to procure to him selfe paines, and labours,

Foure noble affections.

I.

II.

III.

IIII.

Wt. ef-

contempe
of a mans
false.

but also much more to despise all maner of dignitie, honour, and estimation of the worlde, and to loue all kinde of contempt and dishonour for Gods sake. And this affection apperteineth properly vnto humilitie, which is a verie inwarde, and hartie contempte of our selues: Which contempte commeth of the true knowledge of our selues, & of the consideration of our owne finnes. I speake this, to the intente that such as be louers of true humilitie maye vnderstand, that out of this verie same fountaine, from whence that water is drawen that maie cause in vs an hatred and abhorringe of our selues, is that other water drawen also, that susteineth, and watereth the tree of true humilitie, out of which tree all vertues doe springe.

All ver-
tues doe
springe
out of hu-
milite.



TEWSDAIE NIGHTE.

OF THE MISERIES OF
THIS LYFE.

**THIS DAIE (WHEN
THOU HAST MADE THE SIGNE
of the Crosse, & prepared thy selfe,) thou hast to
meditate vpon the condition, and miseries of
this lyfe: that thou mayest by them vnder-
stande, how wayne the glory of this worlde is,
seinge it is built vpon so weake a foundation:
and how litle accompt a man ought to make
of him selfe, being (as he is subiect) vnto so many
miseries.**

Now for this purpose thou
hast to consider first of the
vylenes of the original, and
birthe of man, to witt: the
matter whereof he is com-
pounded: the maner of his conception: the
greifes, and paynes of his birthe: the frailtie,
& miseries of his bodie: accordinge as here-
after shalbe entreated.

Then thou hast to consider the great