

ashamed." It was the sad experience he had of the divisions and distractions of his own heart in the service of God, that made him pour out that prayer, "Unite my heart to fear thy name."

The method in which we shall improve the point shall be this :

i. We shall inquire what the keeping of the heart supposes and imports.

ii. Assign divers reasons, why Christians must make this the great work and business of their lives.

iii. Point at those seasons which especially call for this diligence in keeping the heart.

iv. And lastly, apply the whole in several uses.

What the keeping of the heart supposes and imports. To keep the heart necessarily supposes a previous work of purification, which hath set the heart right, by giving it a new spiritual bent and inclination ; for as long as the heart is not set right by grace, as to its habitual frame, no duties, or means can keep it right with God. Self is the prize of the unsanctified heart, which biases and moves it in all its designs and actions, and as long as it is so, it is impossible that any external means should keep it with God.

Man by creation was of one constant, uniform frame, and tenor of spirit ; held one straight and even course ; not one thought or faculty disordered ; his mind had a perfect illumination to understand and know the will of God ; his will a perfect compliance therewith ; his sensitive appetite, and other inferior powers, stood in obedient subordination.

Man by his fall is become a most disordered and rebellious creature, contesting with, and opposing his Maker, as the first cause, by self-dependence ; as the chief good, by self-love ; as the highest Lord, by self-will ; and as the last end, by self-seeking ; and so is quite disordered, and all his acts irregular. His understanding is clouded with ignorance ; his will full of rebellion and stubbornness ; his subordinate powers, casting off the dominion and government of the superior faculties.

But by regeneration, this disordered soul is set right again ;