

The Fear of God a Resting in His Love.

All the passions are but several ebblings and flowings of the soul, and their motions are the signs of its temper; which way it is carried, that is mainly to be remarked by the beating of its pulse. If our desires and hopes and fears be in the things of this world and the interest of flesh, this is their distemper and disorder: the soul is in a continual fever. But if they move God-wards, then is it composed and calm in a good temper and healthful point, fearing and loving Him, desiring Him and nothing but Him, waiting for Him and trusting in Him. And when any one affection is right, and in a due aspect to God, all the rest are so too; for they are radically one, and He is the life of that soul that is united to Him; and so in Him it moves in a peculiar spiritual manner, as all do naturally in the dependence of their natural life on Him that is the Fountain of Life.

Thus we have here this fear of God, as often elsewhere, set out as the very substance of holiness and evidence of happiness. And, that we may know there is nothing either base or grievous in this fear, we have joined with it delight and trust: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments, which is that badge of love to Him, to observe them, and that with delight, and with great, exceeding delight. So then, the fear is not that which love casts out, but that which love brings in. This fear follows and flows from love, a fear to offend, whereof nothing so tender as love, and that, in respect of the greatness of God, hath in it what a humble reverence. . . .

The fear of God is not, you see, a perplexing doubt and distrust of His love; on the contrary, 'tis a fixed resting and trust on His love. Many that have some truth of grace are, through weakness, filled with disquieting fears; so possibly, though they perceive it not, it may be in some a point of wilfulness, a little latent undiscerned affectionation of scrupling and doubting, placing much of religion in it. Fine, where the soul is really solicitous about its interest in God, that argues some grace; but being vexingly anxious about it, it argues that grace is low and weak. A sparkle there is even discovered by that smoke; but the great smoke still continuing and nothing seen but it, argues there is little fire, little faith, little love. And this as it is unpleasant to thyself, so to God, as smoke to the eyes. . . .

This is the blessed and safe estate of believers. Who can think they have a sad, heavy life? Oh! it is the only lightsome, sweet, cheerful condition in the world! The rest of men are poor, rolling, unstead things, every report shaking them as the leaves of trees are shaken with the wind, yea, lighter than so, as the chaff that the wind drives to and fro at its pleasure. Would men but reflect and look in upon their own hearts, 'tis a wonder what vain childish things the most would find there, glad and sorry at things as light as the toys of children, at which they laugh and cry in a breath; how easily puffed up with a thing or word that pleaseth us, bladder-like, swelled with a little air, and it shrinks again in discouragements and fear upon the touch of a needle point, which gives that air some vent. What is the life of the greatest part but a continual tossing betwixt vain hopes and tears, all their days spent in these? Oh! how vain a thing is a man even in his best estate, while he is nothing but himself, his heart not united and fixed on God, disquieted in vain! How small a thing will do it; he needs no other but his own heart, it may prove

disquietment enough to itself; his thoughts are his tormentors.

I know some men are, by a stronger understanding and moral principles, somewhat raised above the vulgar, and speak big of a constancy of mind; but these are but flourishes, an acted bravery. Somewhat there may be that will hold out in some trials, but far short of this fixedness of faith. Troubles may so multiply as to drive them at length from their posture, and come on so thick with such violent blows, as will smite them out of their artificial guard, disorder all their Seneca and Epictetus, and all their own calm thoughts and high resolves. The approach of death, though they make a good mien and set the best face on it, or if not, yet some kind of terror, may seize on their spirits, which they are not able to shift off. But the soul trusting in God is prepared for all, not only for the calamities of war, pestilence, famine, poverty, or death, but in the saddest apprehensions of soul, above hope believes under hope; even in the darkest night casts anchor in God, reposes on Him, when he sees no light. Yea, though He slay me, says Job, yet will I trust in Him; not only though I die, but though He slay me, when I see His hand lifted up to destroy me, yet from that same hand will I look for salvation. . . .

Well, choose you; but, all reckoned and examined, I had rather be the poorest believer than the greatest king on earth. How small a commotion, small in its beginning, may prove the overturning of the greatest kingdom! But the believer is heir to a kingdom that cannot be shaken. The mightiest and most victorious prince, that hath not only lost nothing, but hath been gaining new conquests all his days, is stopt by a small distemper in the middle of his course. He returns to his dust, then his vast designs fall to nothing, in that very day his thoughts perish. But the believer in that very day is sent to the possession of his crown; that is his coronation day; all his thoughts are accomplished. . . .

'Tis the golly man alone who by this fixed consideration in God looks the grim visage of death in the face, with an unappalled mind. It damps all the joys, and defeats all the hopes of the most prosperous, proudest, and wisest worldlings. . . . Though riches, honours, and all the glories of this world are with a man, yet he fears, yea, he fears the more for these, because here they must end. But the good man looks death out of countenance, in the words of David: Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil, for Thou art with me.

None of Archbishop Leighton's writings were published during his lifetime. They consist of the *Commentary on St. Peter's Sermons*, preached at Newcastle; *Lectures and Addresses*, delivered (mostly in Latin) before the University of Edinburgh; and *Spiritual Exercises, Letters, &c.* These are editions of his works by Fall (1692-1708), Doddridge (1748), Jerment (1805-8), Pearson (1825), Aikman (1831), and West (6 vols. 1869-75, unfinished). There are *Selections* (1891) by Blair; and the *Aids to Reflection* contain very many short passages most admired by Coleridge.

John Ogilby (1600-76) attained a sad eminence as a bad poet not so much from the extraordinary demerit of his verses as from the sneers of Dryden (who groups him with Flecknoe) and—later—of Pope in the *Dunciad*. He was born near Edinburgh, and, while his father lay in the Fleet Prison, reached perfection in the art of dancing-master, figured as a dancer in court-masques, but becoming lame, was employed by Strafford when Lord Deputy