

called a thing of this life, even to reckon myself, my wife, my children, my health, my enjoyments all as dead to me, and myself as dead to them. Yet I was a man compassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place (the prison in which he was writing) as the pulling of my flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am too, too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the hardships, miseries, and wants my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow on thee. But yet, thought I, I must venture all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children. Yet, thought I, I must do it—I must do it. I had this for consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my concernments. Also, I had dread of the torments of hell, which I was sure they must partake of that for fear of the cross do shrink from their profession. I had this much upon my spirit, that my imprisonment might end in the gallows for aught I could tell. In the condition I now was in I was not fit to die, nor indeed did I think I could if I should be called to it. I feared I might show a weak heart, and give occasion to the enemy. This lay with great trouble on me, for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face and tottering knees for such a cause as this. The things of God were kept out of my sight. The tempter followed me with, 'But whither