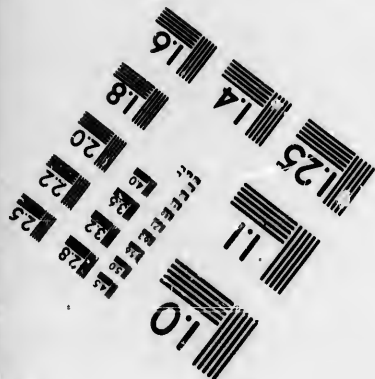
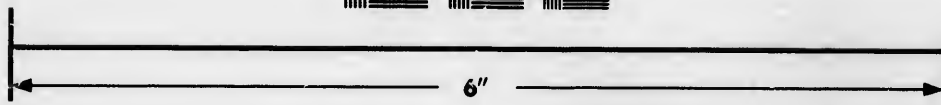
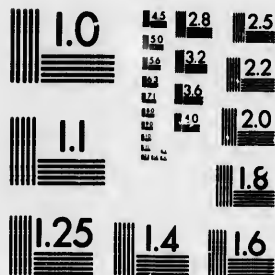


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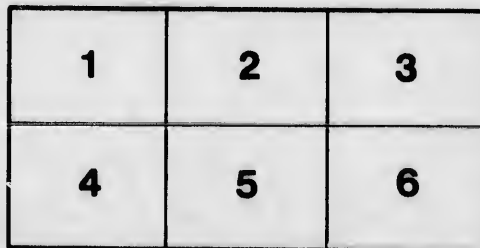
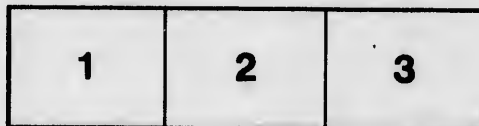
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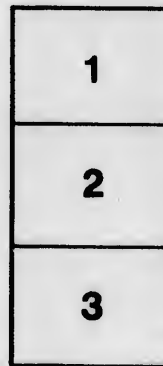
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LEBEARING  
 A  
 GREAT SIN,  
 A  
 SERMON.

*Preached Lord's Day February 22, 1801.*

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THOUGHTS

On the Glorious Gospel of Christ.

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By Clark Penton Protestant Missionary. ✓

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*Qui sicut Jusos Omnes Bonis Operibus Ornatos Fuisse: Clem. ad Corinth.*  
*He that doeth Righteousness is Righteous.—1 John 3, 7.*



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*This Sermon was purchased by J. T.  
53 years after it was preached; being one  
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thus far. On turning over some more*  
TO THE

## Presbyterian Congregation

ASSEMBLING IN

ST. JOHN'S STREET,

QUEBEC,

### This SERMON, &c.

*Is Humbly Inscribed,*

*By Their Servant*

*In the Gospel of Christ,*

CLARK BENTOM.

*of the abundant stock of loose  
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# SERMON.

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LEVITICUS, Chap. 19, Ver. 16.—First Clause:  
Thou shalt not go up and down as a Talebearer among thy People.

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OF all the famous legislators of antiquity, Moses is deservedly esteemed the most famous for two reasons: 1. the purity of his morality and the beneficence of his institutions: this may be denied by Infidels, but experience proves the truth of the assertion. 2. He was inspired, having received, not merely that wisdom from above which is profitable to direct, but his laws immediately from God: hence they claim our highest respect as Christians, and happy the nation, city, or family obeying the moral precepts of this illustrious Hebrew.

But are his laws binding on us? Hath not Christ abolished the Mosaic dispensation?

Our Lord in his person, works, and death, fulfilled the law of commandments contained in ordinances\*, that is, the ceremonial institutions consequently being useless, they are abolished. He hath moreover fulfilled the moral law as our surety† suffering its penalties, and fully obeying its requisitions, that by the obedience of one, many might be made righteous‡. The moral law, therefore, has no longer any force as a Co-

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\* Ephes. 2, 15. † Heb. 7, 22. ‡ Romans, 5, 19.

venant of life to condemn true believers in Christ Jesus, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.*\* But the moral law as a rule of Holiness, is not, nor ever will be abolished. To be holy, because God is holy, is a precept found in the New Testament† as well as in the Old.‡ To be holy is to be like God: the law, then, is nothing more nor less than a description of God's moral perfections accommodated unto man, and expressed in such terms as are best understood by him, a fallen creature.

My text is a branch of the ninth commandment, which is as much neglected, and as frequently broken as any other, though few persons go into a Court of Judicature to bear false witness against their neighbour. This bearing of false-witness is the extremity of the evil prohibited; every thing leading thereto, or in any shape participating of its nature, being equally forbidden. Perhaps you do not all clearly perceive this, yet still here we have a positive command of Jehovah, not less obligatory than the ninth precept of the decalogue: *Thou shalt not go up and down as a Talebearer among thy people.*

In my attempt to enlarge on these words for our present edification, I shall as the Lord enables me consider

I. The evil prohibited, its nature and consequences.

II. The prohibition itself, with the motives to obedience.

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\* Romans, 8, 1. † 1. Peter, 1, 15, 16. ‡ Lev. 11, 44, 45.

And I humbly pray the Lord the Spirit to assist my weakness, and that he would give unto you obedient minds, receiving with simplicity and meekness the truth of his word.

The first thing proposed for consideration, is the evil prohibited in my text, its nature and consequences. This abominable and destructive vice of Talebearing, is often and variously struck at in the sacred oracles of God. The names assigned unto it by the inspired writers, are sufficiently descriptive of its odious nature: of these, I shall only mention four, as being perhaps, the most significant, and answering best to my present purpose.

1. It is called Backbiting,\* because Talebearers are one thing to your face, and another behind your back; like serpents, fair indeed to behold, yet slyly from behind inflicting on the heel a dangerous wound; or like a mischievous dog that runs while your eyes are fixed upon him, yet watches an opportunity of gratifying his vicious humour by tearing your flesh. How base the practice of hiding from my neighbour his sins, yet making every acquaintance the confidant of his follies!

2. It is called whispering:† Secrecy is the frequent covert under which Talebearers propagate slanderous reports. They pretend great fear lest any body should know the matter, yet are never satisfied until every one knows it. My friends, always suspect a teller of secrets. This

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\* 2 Corinth. 12, 20. † 2 Corinth. 12, 20.

is an inspired characteristic of a Talebearer. "*He revealeth secrets*"\* saith Solomon.

3. It is called slandering :† Here we have a very appropriate name indeed, for seldom or never do Talebearers stick to truth ; they love a perfect story, and when it reaches their hand the finishing stroke will not be wanting. Apprehension that a man may fall into error, will soon become suspicion ; he has really done so, and suspicion in the heart of a slanderous person is more than sufficient to attach actual guilt to the most innocent character. The propriety of this term will farther appear, if you consider Talebearers very rarely delight in praising their neighbours except by way of comparison, and such comparisons are odious and invidious, intended only as a soil to blacken the character of others.

4. Talebearers are called Busy-bodies,‡ meddlers in other men's matters, ever investigating the affairs of all around them, interesting themselves unasked in business not their own. Active and busy are they as if talebearing were their daily and lawful occupation. To this answers the hebrew word *Rachil* translated in my text, a talebearer going up and down : it is derived from a word which signifies to trade or to be a merchant and literally means a *Newsmonger*, one trading up and down from house to house as it were, buying, selling and exchanging matters of domestic intelligence, detracting from his neighbour's good name among men.

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\* Prov. 11, 13. † 1 Tim. 3, 11. ‡ 2 Thef. 3, 11.

That I may yet farther expose this unmanly, unchristian, and odious practice, I will speak a few words, on the three parts of which it may be said to consist; production, reception, propagation.

1. Production. It is a lamentable fact we are all sinful, fallible, and imperfect; if the whole of our conduct, therefore, be scrupulously examined, something doubtless, may be found, which, exposed & in the hands of an enemy or Talebearer, would turn to the disadvantage of our character or secular interest. In other words, every man has a weak side, which it is his own as well as his neighbour's duty to conceal, but the direct business of a Talebearer to blaze abroad. This vice, then, arises from the source of all our evils human Depravity, and its immediate object is human Frailty.

Our own defects may be the ground of a report dishonorable to our good name, but frequently, very frequently, the report is either altogether false, or falsely told by the addition or subtraction of some material circumstance, according as it best suits the humour of the relater. Here we may ask what are the reasons assignable for the production of slanderous talebearing? The reasons assignable for its production are many; but I shall enumerate a few only, yet such as perhaps, will one way or other include the whole.

1. Malice. The character spoken of may be obnoxious to us, we consequently catch readily enough at whatsoever may vilify his conduct, as

a means of justifying or gratifying our hatred.  
 2. The love of mischief, which, shocking to say, predominates in the minds of some men, creating delight in the reproach and unhappiness that fall on others. 3. Censoriousness. That is, a disposition to conceive the worst of our neighbour's conduct, viewing in the most unfavourable light their words and actions. This is a very principal reason of the much evil speaking found in the world. If we thought well of our neighbours, we should hardly speak ill of them.  
 4 & lastly, Inventive Loquacity; which many esteem a very agreeable quality, yet is not unfrequently found a very noxious one indeed. We are creatures for the most part naturally communicative; this, like every other passion of the mind, if rightly exercised, would conduce to our improvement and happiness; but when the noble faculty of speech, the glory of our nature, is employed, not, in administering grace to the hearers, but in the indulgence of a talkative disposition, what can be expected? but that our conversation should often injure our neighbour's fame.

2. Reception. Talebearers more usually plead having heard the story than that their eye hath seen it,\* yet the taking up a reproach is not far short of being equally injurious with the invention. Hearing an evil report we cannot always avoid, nevertheless habitual discountenance to Talebearers would prevent a great deal of the mischief & hinder our farther trouble and expo-

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\* Psalm 35, 21.

sure to temptation, for, as the "*north wind dri-  
veth away rain, so doth an angry countenance a  
backbiting tongue.*"\*—Though we cannot at all  
times even when we would, shut our ears to the  
tale of detraction we may chuse wether we be-  
lieve it or not. A readines to entertain every re-  
proachful account of men's actions certainly ar-  
gues little in favour of our own innocence. *Honi  
soit qui mal y pense*, says the King's motto: Let  
evil be reckoned to him who thinks evil of others.  
None so ready to imagine guilt as the actually  
guilty. The evil of receiving slander is much grea-  
ter than generally supposed; had the news-mer-  
chant no customers his trade would decay, and  
many of its bad consequences prevented, but the  
same vile reasons assigned for the production of  
Talebearing, will be found to operate in the re-  
ception of its produce.

3. Propagation. Here lies the principal part of  
the mischief, could we restrain evil thinking from  
evil speaking, the effects would be less fatal than  
not unfrequently they prove. Propagation has  
three branches; the means, the mode, and the end  
proposed. 1. The means. These are various con-  
versation, gestures, writing, &c. I say gestures,  
for winking with the eye, stamping with the  
foot, or pointing with the finger, may as effec-  
tually traduce a man's character as words used in  
conversation: *A wicked man walketh with a frow-  
ard mouth, he winketh with his eyes, he speaketh  
with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers.*"† It

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\* Prov. 25, 23. † Prov. 6, 12, 13.



may be done by writing, which is what our common law calls libel. In this way the Jews were slanderously reported by their enemies to be inimical to the Medo-Perfian government; and Jerusalem, the joy and excellency of the whole Earth called the rebellious and bad city.\*

2. The mode of propagation. And here we may see the 'ruth of Solomon's remark, "*Burning lips with a wicked heart, are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.*"† Lips burning with intelligence, not seldom with professions of warm friendship, thus covered with the appearance of silver, yet in reality with nothing but dross. What does this dross cover? a worthless potsherd, a piece of a broken earthen vessel, the most worthless perhaps, of all commodities. Professed friendship is with Talebearers the guarded hilt of a two-edged sword, or a strong bow from which the poisoned arrows of slander may be more securely shot. They will begin with a commendation of the person they mean to abuse, and conclude with a—But—which, as the dagger of an assassin, wounds irretrievably the honor of the injured object. Tales of scandal are mostly carried forward by way of a *little chat* as 'tis called. We have tongues, and we must talk, and where grace is not in the heart, can we expect it on the lips? Assuredly not! When graceless people meet for a *little chat*, how many times would their conversation be reduced to a mere skeleton,

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\* Vide Ezra, chap. 4. † Prov. 26, 23.

were their neighbours' conduct, words, and actions altogether omitted.

3. The end proposed in propagating slander : which is in some much worse than in others, in none harmless nor excusable. The design of some is the injury of their neighbours' reputation and trade, and the enriching themselves by their ruin, but these, I hope and believe are comparatively very few.

Another sort are seeking by the defamation of this or that person's character, to exalt or justify their own. Of this class, are those who maliciously invent, joyfully receive, and industriously propagate slanderous reports of godly men. This is done merely to prove all men alike, that professors of piety are no better than those they reprove. And if they could prove this, what do they merit for their pains? I am sure they merit nothing of mankind, for in proving all men impenitent un sanctified sinners, they prove they will all be damned! Thus saith the faithful and true Witness, "*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*"\* Let God be true, and every man a liar.† Blessed be God all men are not alike; there are in the world a few truly pious souls, though in comparison, emphatically called a *remnant*.

The more numerous class of Talebearers, are those whose chief aim is the amusement of themselves and friends. They tell us, and per-

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\* Luke 13, 3. † Romans 3, 4.

haps 'tis true, they would be sory to injure essentially the character of the person in question; but is it not, Men and Brethren, a shocking idea to amuse ourselves with the weakneses, follies and failings of our fellow creatures? You mean no harm! "throwing fire-brands and saying, it is all but in sport."

Having thus endeavoured to dissect, in some measure, this common, yet no less infamous vice, let us enquire, what is the cause of its so great prevalence among mankind? *Love*, saith Peter, *hideth a multitude of sins* (faults.)\* *It endureth all things*, † saith Paul. Love to God, and love to man for God his Creator's sake, when it possesses the heart, shuts out evil surmising and selfish views, aims singly in all its actings at God's glory, and the good of his intelligent creatures; and whatsoever is contrary to this its holy nature, is shunned and abhorred: consequently it neither delights in sin nor in the unhappy effects that follow its commission. But Talebearers delight in spreading abroad the sin and shame of mankind; and why? Their hearts are destitute of that Divine Love which neither thinketh nor worketh ill to its neighbour. Man is a son of earth, Love is the first-born of Heaven, Man is corrupt, Love is pure. Love then dwells not by nature in the heart of Man: it is the offspring of that Divine Faith, which is the gift of God. ‡ This Faith, the fruitful parent of holy graces, is possessed by few of Adam's pos-

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\* 1 Pet. 4, 8. † 1 Cor. 13, 7. ‡ Ephes. 2, 8.

terity.\* Shall we wonder then, that slanderous talebearing abounds so exceedingly among us? Let us wonder rather at the restraining Providence of God, which prevents mankind in so great a measure, from devouring like beasts of prey the one the other.†

From the evil itself, I proceed to its consequences, the bitter fruit of this tree of mischief.—“*A good tree, saith the Lord, bringeth forth good fruit, and an evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*” What sort of fruit may be expected from so corrupt a tree as Talebearing we may readily imagine. The vine thereof is the vine of Sodom, and its grapes are grapes of gall.‡ The wise King of Israel tells us, there are seven abominations in the heart of him that dissembleth with his lips § I think we may say with propriety, there are seven abominations in the heart of Talebearing.

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\* Isaiah 53, 1.

† I say “In so great a measure,” for the unsearchable wisdom of God hath seen meet, not to restrain men altogether from the horrid practice of feeding on human flesh. At the Marquesas, a group of Islands in the Pacific Ocean, the inhabitants slay and eat one another almost as common as we do sheep and oxen, neither do they appear to have the least idea of its criminality. *Femoteitei*, a native of St. Christina, one of these Islands, who came to England with Mr. Crook, the Missionary, and was in London when I left it to come hither, and with whom I several times conversed, although he had been 14 months among the English, was not convinced of its impropriety. “We (says he) have no beef, no mutton, men is our proper food.”—Behold Human Nature in its Perfection, without Revelation, without the Shackles of Regular Government, without Dignitaries, Taxes, &c. Does not this simple fact, without a comment, prove, Mr. Paine and his more learned Coadjutors but shallow Philosophers?

‡ Deuteron. 32, 32. § Prov. 26, 25.

1. It injures the peace of Society: where is there state, where is there a city, town or village that has not been disturbed by the strife of tongues? How oft have nations been plunged into all the horrors of war, by the loquacious backbiting spirit of officious Courtiers? Private societies & families, from the highest to the lowest, feel at one time or other the baneful effects of this malignant pestilence.

2. It injures the peace of Churches. All professors of godliness, it is a sad truth, are not all possessors of vital religion: among the Apostles themselves, behold a Judas, the most vile of Talebearers. It is true, also, good men are not always perfect men; their words and actions therefore may occasionally be blameable and offensive. The only way then to preserve the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, is the forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, in love.\* Nothing more effectually prevents this desirable state of things in Christian communities than Talebearing. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so, where there is no Talebearer the strife ceaseth,"† and *vice versâ*, where there is wood the fire burneth, so where there is a Talebearer strife is kindled and continued. One Talebearer in a Church will do more mischief in one week than a Minister may be able to repair in seven years.

3. It injures the peace of godly souls. "*A good name is precious, more to be desired than*

\* Colof. 3, 13. † Prov. 26, 20.

*great riches:*"\* it is a thing lying nigh the heart of every man, and in subordination to God's glory: it is right it should, for a Christian's duty is both to avoid the appearance of evil, and to take heed that his good be not evil spoken of. Talebearing as I have shown foils the reputation of the most innocent character, and must consequently often disturb the peace of a conscientious mind, and not seldom retard its growth in holiness. David laboring under the oppression of this hateful sin, penned two of his many excellent Psalms, viz. the 7th and 52d. directly setting forth the accursed nature and grievous consequences of a slanderous tongue; and in several others, we find him complaining unto his God of deceitful and reproachful men. "*What shall be given unto thee or what shall be done unto thee thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of juniper.*"†

4. It obscures the Glory of God. Man was created in the image of God: this holy image, to the dishonor of himself and his Holy Creator, he lost by rebellion. The honor of man as a moral Agent and the honor of his Righteous Maker, are inseparably connected: a Talebearer, therefore, in publishing the disgrace of man, obscures the glory of his Creator also, again, whatsoever hinders the growth of Churches or individual souls in holiness, affects the honor of God, whose name is glorified by the holiness of his people.

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\* Solomon. † Psalm 120, 3, 4.

5. It dishonors the great Head of the Church, our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ. The honor of a King are the peace and prosperity of his subjects; contention and poverty among them his disgrace: Talebearers are troublers in Sion, bringing leanness on their own and others' souls, whereby the name of our Glorious King Immanuel is exposed to shame and contempt. Consider also the Church is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.\* If any part of our bodies suffer pain or reproach, does not the head as well as the whole of the members sympathize with it? and when any, the most seemingly unimportant member of Christ's mystical body be grieved or put to shame, Jesus partakes of its sorrow and ignominy.

6. Talebearing as a sin in itself, and in many of its ill effects, grieves the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is said to be grieved, when the actions of believers are contrary and offensive to the Lord, their sanctifier; because, when any thing offensive occurs unto us, we are usually grieved. God, in speaking of himself, thus condescends to our infirmities. Talebearing, the unholy source of so much contention and hatred, cannot fail of being highly offensive to the spirit of holiness, peace and love. O blessed Spirit, wash our guilty souls in the cleansing fountain of the Redeemer's blood!

7. What the seventh abomination is, after what I have said, you may easily conceive.

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\* Ephes. 1, 23.



Talebearing, like every other sin unrepented of, will bring destruction on the soul.

From the depravity of our nature it must be that such offences come, but "*Woe unto the men by whom they come.*" Tattling, as the Apostle once calls it,\* may be lightly esteemed and viewed, if as a sin at all, yet as a very little one, a trifling failing of no importance: but consider Sirs, every thing in creation is important or unimportant, in proportion as it affects more or less the well-being of the whole: review, then, the horrid consequences of Talebearing above enumerated, and if you can disprove them, say, the evil is not so great as I am laboring to prove it, but if they are true, as they most certainly are, I beseech you, as you desire the everlasting welfare of your souls, desist from so destructive a practice. This brings me to consider,

2dly. The Prohibition itself with the motives to obedience.

I fear some present may think my text strange, if not impertinent and trifling; but let what I have said suffice to prove it a precept not unworthy of the God that gave it. Its necessity, is indeed its best apology: at what period of the world's existence would it have been unnecessary to warn men against the sin of Talebearing? Not in the garden of Eden, when the Devil and Eve belied their maker; not in the family of Abraham, when Sarah solicited the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, nor was it unnecessary in

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\* 1 Timothy 5, 13.

the house of Jacob, when by talebearing, murder possessed the hearts of Joseph's brethren. Would Moses have thought it an unnecessary precept for the meditation of Aaron and Miriam when backbiting his wife the Cushite? Jehovah thought it not unnecessary to reprove them *publicly*, though eminent characters in Church and State.

The prohibition is moreover, very useful in preserving souls from sinning against God: obedient souls, I mean, for unto the rebellious it proves as do other parts of God's word, *a savour of death unto death*,\* an increase of condemnation, for he that backbites his neighbour after the reception of this command, not only commits a sin morally evil in itself, but rebels against a positive injunction of the Lord God.

You all know, I am persuaded, the thing to be evil, having most likely experienced more or less of its hurtful effects. I entreat you, then, consider when tempted to relate a scandalous report of your neighbour, it cannot be done without grievously offending God, the omnipotent Judge of Heaven and Earth. Ask at such a time with the pious son of Jacob, "*How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*"† What! say you, must we shut our mouths? Must we be ever watching the door of our lips? Not for you, truly Sir! Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us? Nay, my Brethren, confound not my words with the word of the Lord: it is not

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\* Corint. 2, 16. † Gen. 39, 9.

written " Thus saith the Preacher," but " Thus saith the Lord," *Thou shalt not go up and down as a Talebearer among thy people.* Should there be present a sinner sufficiently hardened to use such ungodly language as " My tongue is my own, &c." I beg him to consider for a few moments, the third and fourth verses of the twelfth Psalm, "*The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips and the tongue that speaketh proud things who have said, with our tongue will we prevail, who is Lord over us?*"

I proceed to speak on the motives that should induce obedience to this beneficent command of our God, contained in these words " Thy People." The first principle of obedience to any of God's commands is supreme regard to the divine authority of the Eternal Lawgiver; yet other subordinate motives, as the fitness or unfitness of the thing commanded or prohibited, are proper and useful to intelligent beings: the Lord in his word hath therefore furnished us with these subordinate motives to assist us in the mortification of our corrupt affections, the indulgence of which, would secure unto us the everlasting wrath of God. On this emphatic clause " Thy People," I would observe,

1. It is the duty of every man to seek the peace and welfare of the community at large in which he resides, which can alone be done by a steady perseverance in the practice of those virtues which conduce to its happiness, and by

the continually avoiding such vices as are prejudicial to its interests.

The feuds and animosities engendered by backbiting, whispering, &c. sufficiently teach us we are far from seeking the good of our fellow creatures when exercising a slanderous tongue. The injurious effects Talebearing has on society, should stimulate us at all seasons, to avoid and discountenance the unworthy practice.

2. As men imperfect and fallible, we ought to remember our liability to sin and error, yea rather our actual offenses against the Adorable Majesty of Heaven, which might tend to humble the soul and silence the tongue. Let us ever bear in mind the truly significant admonition of our Lord Christ, "*He that is without sin let him cast the first stone.*" If when tempted to speak ill of others, we were to examine our own hearts, the force of the temptation would not only be broken, but spiritual advantage often derived from it.

3. As Christians more especially, it is our duty never to forget, if we are indeed followers of Jesus Christ, it is because the Lord hath *pardoned our sins* through the atoning merits of a Righteous Mediator.\*

Nor ought we to forget our probationary state in the flesh, exposed to temptations on the right hand and on the left. When a Brother, either by nature or grace, falls into sin, consider thyself lest thou also be tempted, and for thy proud revilings of thy fellow, God should leave thee to

\* Titus 3, 3--8.

thyself, and thy foot slide into worse iniquity.

4 And lastly ; If Men or Christians speak not well of themselves, can they expect others should do so ? Angels with grief, must confess our guilt, and Devils rejoice in our shame. Can professors of Religion please the world better than by reviling their associates ? Certainly not ! The Roman Emperor Julian exclaimed, “ See how these Christians love one another ! ” I would to God the enemies of the Church in the present day were all constrained to a like confession. Alas ! how often is it justly inverted “ See how the Christians hate one another ! ”

I shall now conclude, by humbly proposing a few things which practised may operate in some measure as a cure for the evil I have thus reprobated.

1. Judge not, lest ye be judged : \* endeavour always to put the most favourable construction on the words and actions of all with whom you have dealings or intercourse : remember yourselves accountable to a Righteous Judge, at whose tremendous bar every man must stand & receive a reward or punishment according to the deeds done in the body. “ *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. † For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. ‡*

2. Speak evil of no man, § whether true or

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\* Matthew 7, 1.

† Matthew 7, 2.

‡ James 2, 13.

§ Titus 3, 2.

false, unless an evident necessity call you thereto, as the vindication of the character or estate of another, or when the good of society in legal cases demands the exposure of vice or wicked men, and yet permit me to say, the indulgence of a vindictive spirit is by no means the mark of a righteous man: of Joseph, the betrothed husband of the Blessed Virgin it is said, when he found his spouse in a state of pregnancy, thinking her criminal, "*He being a just man and not willing to make her a public example was minded to put her away privily,*"† How beautifully does the Holy Ghost thus commend his pious compassion and manly forbearance towards the supposed culprit!

3. Always speak as far as truth permits in favor of an absent person. Bad indeed must be a man's character, if it afford no trait worthy of commendation. While others then are busily occupied in finding and exposing that which is evil, let us be as diligently employed in discovering and setting forth as an alloy that which is good. To vindicate an accused man in his absence is but doing as we wish all men should do unto us, and this is the law and the prophets.‡

4. Consider especially the character of the Apostle and High Priests of our profession Jesus Christ. He descended from the heights of glory and bliss to the depths of poverty and shame, that he might weave the righteous gar-

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† Matthew 1, 19. ‡ Matthew 7, 12.

ments of love with which to cloathe the naked souls of his people and hide their transgressions.

This was the purpose of his life, and at death behold his lips employed in the noblest work of Charity, praying for his enemies, and pleading in their behalf the only circumstance that could extenuate their crime "*Father forgive them they know not what they do!*" Yet observe, our Lord came not to hide transgression from the sinner himself, far otherwise! he was as faithful in reprovng as gracious in forgiving: so ought we faithfully as commanded, *Levit.* 19, 17, admonishing our brother, and in no wise suffering sin upon him, lest, as says the margin of the passage just quoted, we *bear sin for him*. The tongue, according to St. James, is a world of iniquity, setting on fire the course of nature, itself set on fire of Hell; ever speaking when & what it should not, and when the cause of God and Truth requires the due exertion of its powers we most frequently find it bridled by the Dévil. I add no more may command his blessing. *Amen.*

END OF THE SERMON.



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**T H O U G H T S**

ON THE GLORIOUS

**G O S P E L O F C H R I S T .**

2 COR. 4, 4.—In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the *Glorious Gospel of Christ* who is the image of God should shine into them.

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**H**OW dreadful the fall of Man ! While obedient to the authority and laws of his Creator his honor and happiness were complete : when sin by the subtilty of the old Serpent called the Devil and Satan\* found place in his heart, how great the change ! *How is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed !* † In a state of holiness Jehovah, the ineffably Glorious Jehovah was the Lord and Protector, the Joy, Confidence and Glory of our race, in a word our God. “ O Adam what has thou done ! ” Is Jehovah no longer the God of this world ? What Foreign Deity usurps the prerogatives of Divine Governance ? Has the Prince of Darkness ‡ got uncontrouled possession of our hearts, appropriating to his service the noble powers of the soul created for the worship of God, and God alone ? Oh that it were false ! But what say the scriptures ? “ *The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Man is born a wild ass's colt. A Child of wrath taken*

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\* Rev. 12, 19. † Lament. 4, 1. ‡ Ephes. 2, 2 & 6, 12.

*captive by the Devil at his will.*"\* Are we at any loss then to divine who is the God of this world? His servants are we to whom we obey whether to God by righteousness or to the Devil by works of iniquity.†

The wages of sin is death. Death Temporal, Death Spiritual, Death Eternal! Alas, alas how deep the wound that sin hath made! But is there no Balm in Gilead, is there no Physician there? Ever blessed be God there is a sovereign, an all-powerful Remedy, the Native Balsam of the tree of life,‡ there is a Physician whose skill is infinite, and whose compassion towards the poor, the destitute is unbounded. No case, however desperate, when entrusted to his care, ever failed of a perfect cure. *Why then is not the health of the Daughter of my People recovered?* § The Remedy is unapplied, the Physician is despised, his servants treated with scorn and their commendations of their master's grace and skill hooted as profound quackery. Wherefore? "*The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine into them.*

The Glorious Gospel of Christ! Behold the Balm in Gilead, behold the Physician there. The Glorious Gospel of Christ! Behold the foundation of a Christian's Hope, an Hope pregnant with immortality and the sure expect-

\* Jerem. 17, 9. Job 11, 12. Ephes. 2, 3. 2 Tim. 2, 26.

† Rom. 6, 16. ‡ Rev. 22, 2. § Jerem. 8, 22.

tation of Eternal Glory. This, O ye sons of Adam is the only yet infinitely sufficient Refuge for sinners exposed as ye are to the vengeance of Everlasting Fire !

Surely then it is important to ask : Who is this Christ ? What is his Gospel ? Wherein is it Glorious ?

Who is this Christ ? The Everlasting Father the Creator of the ends of the earth, the Almighty, God over all, blessed for ever, Upholding all things by the word of his Power, and before whose Judgment seat we all must stand and give an account of ourselves unto God even unto the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ who is one with the Father and Holy Spirit, and in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.\* Do you ask " How can these things be," can one be three and three be one ? How these things can be I know not, God who dwells in the thick darkness having cast an impenetrable veil over this as well as over every other *modus* of his Unsearchable Perfections.

That these things *are* I know, God having revealed them in his word, and to me his *Ipse Dixit* (thus saith the Lord) is infinitely more than all the hows ? of Philosophy from the Lofty Speculations of the would-be intuitively wise Mother of Mankind to the Learned So-

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\* Isaiah 9, 6. Colof. 1, 16. Rev. 1, 8. Rom. 9, 5. Heb. 1, 3. Rom. 14, 10—13. Titus 2, 13. 1 Joh. 5, 7. Colof. 2, 9.

phisms of this *Age of Reason*. Tell us O ye Socinians, how God is from Eternity, then will we explain unto you how God is three in one.

Who is Christ? Immanuel, God with us the Eternal Word, the Efficient Power of the Godhead who was made Flesh and dwelt among us.\* Though he was rich in all the glories and attributes of Deity, he became poor a *Man* of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, that we through his poverty might become rich: † rich in pardon, rich in the divine favor, rich in the sanctifying influences of the Spirit. Blessed be God, he was indeed a *Man*, and as man and mediator inferior to the Father, ‡ and when his mediatorial work is done, then shall he deliver up the unlimited Powers of his Mediation unto the God that gave them, and the Son himself as the first born among many brethren shall be subject unto God also that the Divine Nature may again as originally be all in all. §

What is the Gospel of Christ? Evangelion translated Gospel || signified to the Greeks any good or acceptable intelligence ¶ hence its use with the inspired writers to denote the blessed doctrine of man's Redemption, and the great truths connected therewith.

This Gospel is the best intelligence that ever founded in the ears of man, or ever interested

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\* Math. 1, 23. John Chapter 1st in initio. † 2 Cor. 8, 9, ‡ John 14, 28. § 1 Cor. 15, 28. || God's Spell or Speech Saxon. ¶ Quum enim Evangelium Gracis quemvis bonum et optatum nuncium declarat, &c. Beza.

the feelings of the human heart. Man had forfeited by his crimes the favor of God: cut off from the Fountain of Holiness, the disposition and actings of his soul quickly became altogether corrupt and sinful. What remained? A fearful looking for of Judgment, Eternal Distance from God! But Glory to redeeming Grace, “*Jesus hath died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God.*”<sup>\*</sup> This, then, is the Gospel of Christ; Restoration unto God, his Favor and Holiness, unto his Favor by the Blood of Christ, unto his Holiness by the Spirit of Christ.

Sin being an offense against the Moral Government of an infinitely Just and Holy God, could not be pardoned without an adequate satisfaction to his Justice, by which the Truth, Holiness and Equity of the Divine Nature might be manifested. † Nor could the sinner be admitted into communion with God, which is an essential part of Salvation, until the pollution as well as the guilt of sin were removed, ‡ “*Without Holiness no man shall see the Lord.*” †

Jesus, our Great High Priest, by the once offering himself a *Sacrifice for sins* acceptable to God, hath for ever perfected the Salvation of them that are *sanctified*. § Man had sinned, behold a *Man* dying for *sin*. The satisfaction required was infinite; behold Jesus the *Godman* ¶

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\* 1 Peter 3, 18. † Romans 3, 23—27. ‡ Heb. 12, 14.  
John 3, 3, 5. § Heb. 10, 10—15. ¶ John 1, 14.

Redeemer numbered with the *Transgressors*, rendering unto Justice the glory due. The Righteousness of God, and the Righteousness of the Surety being thus declared, God is now Just, (manifestly so) yet the Justifier of the ungodly that believe in Jesus, although he condemns unbelievers and executes upon them his fierce wrath, \* *He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.* † My soul, it concerneth thee to ask what is this Believing, this Faith that bringeth Salvation into the soul of its Possessor? There is a faith whose fruit is only fear in the conscience, “ *Devils believe and tremble,* ‡ but Devils shall not be saved. There is a Faith unaccompanied by the sanctifying operations of the Spirit, leaving the soul as barren as it found it, without fruit unto God. “ Faith without works is dead” § Faith that does not sanctify the *heart* will not profit in the day of God, far otherwise: *He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* || Faith which is the Gift of God, ¶ not only saves the soul from wrath and condemnation by the application of the blood of Christ to the conscience, but purifies the *Heart*\*\* and when the heart is purified, the life will be sanctified: it cannot be otherwise; the fountain being holy, the streams will be holy also.

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\* Rom. 3, 26. † 2 Thes. 1, 7, 8. ‡ Mark 16, 16. § James 2, 19. Mark 5, 7. || Luke 12, 48. ¶ Ephes. 2, 8.  
 \*\* By the heart, I mean the Understanding, Will and Affections, which are the Main Spring of Action.



The *Unsanctified man* then is in scripture sense, an *Unbelieving man*, is as yet unrestored unto the Holiness of God, and whatever his profession may be, is in the gall of bitterness, sin, and in the bonds of iniquity; under the condemnation of the Law,\* Whom God pardoneth them he sanctifieth. “ *If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.*” †

Wherein is this Gospel Glorious? Glorious in its origin. The God of Glory in Eternity by an act of Grace, Free Grace, Unmerited, Unasked, Unthought of Grace, planned the astonishing scheme of Man's Redemption. If it were not thus sovereign and free, why is Salvation sent to Men while the fallen Angels are reserved, under wrath, unto the blackness of darkness for ever. ‡

Glorious in its Execution. The Triune God assumes and is revealed under the relative Characters of Father, Son and Holy Ghost § Equals in nature, operation, and attribute. The Father soliciting the concerns of Truth and Justice, the Son in concord herewith, opening the door of Mercy by the sacrifice of himself, the Eternal Spirit as the agent of the Father and of the Son, applying the Redemption by the sanctification of the Redeemed. How infinite the condescension! how amazing the wisdom! how consummate the Grace! that wrought Salvation.

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\* Acts 8, 23. 1 Cor. 15, 56. † Romans 8, 9. ‡ Vide Jude's Epistle. § John 5, 7.

*" O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."\**

Glorious in its Effects. Displaying the Perfections of the Divine Nature in an infinite degree beyond all the Creation besides visible and invisible could do, "*To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.*"† In the Gospel God is manifested at once Holy, Just, and True, Merciful, Slow to Anger, and of Great Kindness.‡

Man totally ruined without God and without hope in the world, is again brought nigh by the blood of Jesus. His soul alienated from the life of God, from heavenly, spiritual and holy, become earthly sensual and devilish, is renewed by the Spirit in knowledge and true holiness, after the image of God that created him: thus fitted for the enjoyment of God and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, will in due season, receive *a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of Glory.* § Glory, Glory, Glory, to the wonder-working God the Saviour, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, *Amen and Amen.*

Methinks I hear some Reader exclaim, Glorious Enthusiasm! Consummate Fanaticism! I reply Glorious Truth! Prove the Scriptures not the Word of God, prove what I have said

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\* Rom. 11, 33. † Ephes. 3, 10. ‡ Exod. 34, 6, 7.  
§ Ephes. 4, 18, 19, 24. Colos. 3, 10. Acts 26, 18. 2 Cor. 4, 17.

unrevealed in the Scriptures, or for the sake of common sense be silent and fear, lest a Promise being left of entering into rest, thou shouldst be everlastingly excluded !

ERRATUM.

Page 21—In the last line but one of the Sermon, for “*may command his blessing*” read—*may God command his Blessing.*

In Page 29—At the end of the second paragraph, after the words “*for ever*” insert a note of interrogation.



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