

Sobermindedness Recommended

by

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SOBERMINDEDNESS *Recommended:*

IN A

S E R M O N

Preach'd to a

SOCIETY OF CATECUMENS

IN

Jewen-Street:

On *April* the 22d. 1717.

And Printed at their Request

By EDMUND CALAMY, D.D.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN CLARK, *at the Bible and Crown in the Poultry, near Cheapside; and* JOHN MARSHALL *at the Bible in Grace-church-street.* 1717.

Price Four Pence.

TITUS II. 6.

*Young Men likewise exhort
to be soberminded.*



NE of the most celebrated among the Pagan Philosophers, declar'd against admitting any to the Hearing of His Moral Lectures and Instructions, but those whole Years brought Gravity and Sedateness. He look'd upon Young Men as so much under the Conduct of irregular Passions, that he apprehended the treating with them about the Way of reaching true Happiness, Self-Government, Vertue and Vice, Good and Evil, and other Points of Morality, would be much like the presenting a Consort of Excellent Musick to a Company of Deaf Persons, who through the indisposition of their Organs, were incapable of perceiving its Harmony or Melody. Which in reality was a giving up the Flower of Humane Life for lost; and suffering a Wound to turn to a Gangreen, and become desperate, before any Remedies were us'd for a Cure: A Method not to be accounted for!

BUT those divine Teachers that were sent of GOD, to teach Mankind the Knowledge of Himself and of their Duty, and of the right Way to true

Happiness, have been universally of another Mind. They whose excellent Instructions are contain'd in those sacred Records which we call our Bibles, who must be own'd to have understood the Degeneracy and Disorders of the Humane Race since their Apostacy from the Great Author of their Beings, and the Method of their Cure, infinitely better than any that had only the meer Light of Nature to conduct them; I mean the Prophets under the *Old Testament*, and our Lord's Apostles under the *New*, have gone upon another Scheme. So far are they from banishing young Ones from their Schools and Auditories, and debarring them of publick and private Instruction, that none are more freely admitted, or more earnestly invited: Nor are there any with whom they deal more freely, than such as are in the Flower of their Youth, in order to the forming them into an unfeigned Holiness, both of Heart and Life.

IT is therefore amazing, that any who call themselves Christians, should indirect Opposition to their prime Instructors, attempt to confine Religion and the Fear of GOD to Persons advanc'd in Years, and in the mean time be for giving Scope to Youth, without taking any Pains about them, to take their Swinge, and pursue their Inclinations, till they come to learn the Folly of Extravagance by their own Experience. This is in effect, to declare for letting those whom the Great GOD has form'd for his own Glory, alone, to give the best Part of their Days to the Devil, without any Controul or Check, least they should seem too grave, appear morose or reserv'd, or be hindred in their sensual or secular Pursuits; while the Blessed GOD must stand by and wait their Leisure, and such Habits are contracted, as are not afterwards to be shaken off, without the greatest Difficulty in the World: than which nothing is more irrational and absurd.

LET Lust once get its Head, who can secure a Retreat? What Mortal can undertake to cleanse a Black-a-More's Skin, or wipe out the Spots of a Leopard? Who is there, that in temporal Affairs takes not care to set out well, if he would make a good Advance? And why should not the
same

same Reason hold in religious, as in lower Matters? Doth not common Sense teach us to strike upon Iron while it is hot; to straiten a Tree while it is a Twig; to work upon Wax while it is soft; and to heal a Sore while it is yet green? and is it not to the full as reasonable, that Persons should remember their Creator and Redeemer, and mind their Duty to Him, and learn to govern themselves, and carry it well to their Neighbours, and secure their own eternal Happiness, while they are yet young and tender, and have warmer Affections, and fewer Diversions, Difficulties and Hindrances, than in any Part of their Lives that follows after? A Man would think there should be no Room for Dispute, in so plain a Case.

THE Morning of the Day is generally reckon'd the fittest Time for momentous Business; Persons have then Time before 'em wherein to dispatch and finish it: But 'tis certainly so, as to the Morning of Life; in which to neglect the chief Business we have to employ our Thoughts, is to lose Time, and run a great Hazard, and the ready Way to have the Shadows of the Evening overspread us, before we have done any Thing to Purpose in it, which would be ruinous and destructive.

WE all reckon *Solomon* among the wisest of Men. Now he wrote his Book of Proverbs, (which contains more solid Learning than all the Writings of the Philosophers put together) as he himself expressly declares, for this among other Reasons, *To give the young Man Knowledge and Discretion:* And we have very good Evidence, That that one Book seriously minded, will instil into him such Knowledge and Wisdom, as will be sufficient to make him happy, both in this World and the next, which is as much as can be desir'd. To such also do the Prophets oft address themselves.

Prov. 1.4.

WHEN *Moses* gave *Israel* Commandments from GOD, he order'd that they should *teach them diligently unto their Children.* *David* was concern'd that *young Men* might *cleanse their Ways, by talking Heed thereto, according to the Word.* And *Isaiah*, was for *teaching Knowledge* to such as were *weaned from the Milk*, and making those that were *drawn from the Breasts*

Deut. vi.

7.

Psal. cxix.

9.

Isa. xxviii.

9.

Matt. xix.
16, &c.
Mark x.
21.

Breasts to understand Doctrine. Our Blessed Lord Himself, when He was upon Earth, we find took Pleasure in Directing and Instructing a *young Man*; and hearing him discourse and answer well, we are told. *He loved him.* The Apostles also appear concern'd for young Ones, as well as those advanc'd in Years. Of such does St. *Paul* order *Titus* the Evangelist, to take a peculiar Care, when he's giving him particular Directions about the right Discharge of the sacred Ministry that was committed to him. He gives him a Charge concerning them, that is short, but very full and comprehensive. Exhort such, says he, to be Soberminded.

THE Persons to whom he was order'd to give an Exhortation, were *young Men*; such as were in their Minority; and not yet come to their full Growth; but were from Year to Year advancing in Bulk, and Stature, and Experience. He was to *exhort* such; that is, not only to let their Duty before them, but to press them with the most moving Arguments, to see themselves to discharge it, calling in Help from Above. And if such as they, were to be exhorted, we may be assur'd the Apostle look'd upon them as capable of receiving an Exhortation, as well as Persons more advanc'd in Years, if GOD was but pleas'd to concur with his heavenly Blessing. And if it was a fit Thing for such to be exhorted by Evangelists, there is equal Reason for their being exhorted by ordinary Gospel Ministers, who cannot give Proof of their Fidelity, if they wholly neglect them.

TITUS you see was charg'd to *exhort young Men to be Soberminded*, and we need not doubt but he did as he was order'd. All Gospel Ministers are under a like Charge. 'Tis in Pursuit of it, that I at the Call of Providence appear here before you this Morning, to give you such an Exhortation. I hope you are come hither dispos'd to hear your Duty, and desirous to be stirr'd up to it, and to receive Advice, that you may mind and follow it. I hope You'll believe 'tis your real Good I aim at, and that I am in Earnest in what I say. If so, I beseech you, be attentive, weigh Things well, lay them to Heart, and pray for a Blessing.

I SHALL order my Discourse in this Method.

- I. I'LL open the Matter of the Exhortation here mention'd; shew you what is imply'd in the *Sobermindedness* to which St. *Paul* would have all *young Men* earnestly press'd; and so give you a clear Notion of your Duty.
- II. BECAUSE there are many with whom a bare Sense of Duty will not sufficiently prevail; nay, because that single Consideration is not apt to be over prevalent with any. I'll prenent yon with several cogent Motives to induce you to mind it, and take Care about it.
- III. SUPPOSING that by that Time I have gone thus far, some of you at least, may be ready to call for Help, I'll give you some general Directions, that may assist you in your Endeavours after that *Sobermindedness*, which is so desirable, and would be highly beneficial. And then,
- IV. *And Lastly*, I'LL a little pursue the specify'd Exhortation in some Particulars that I take to be of great Concernment. And the Good LORD grant, that neither your Labour nor mine may herein be lost.

I. I BEGIN with opening the Matter of the Exhortation in the Text, which needs to be distinctly explain'd, that so it may be discern'd what it is to which the Apostle would have *Young Men* earnestly preis'd, and what therefore is their plain and unquestionable Duty. *Young Men exhort to be soberminded*. I'll here consider both the the *Word* and the *Thing*.

As for the *Word*, 'tis often us'd both in Civil Authors and Sacred. In Common and Civil Authors, the Word we here render *to be soberminded*, signifys to be Regular and Chaste. Modest and Temperate, Pure and Holy, Prudent and Cautious; not to be addicted to injuriousness, or to any Thing that is immoderate or excessive; bur to exercise self-Government, both as to Pleasure and Grief, and o-
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Σόφρων
Σοφρονέω
Σοφροσ-
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ther Passions of the Mind, which are most apt to Ruffle and Discompose, and create an inward Tumult and Combustion. It were an easy Thing to give a Variety of Instances by Citations, but that I can't see 'twould signify any Thing to my present Purpose, which is rather to be a faithful Monitor than a Cricick.

IT admits also of several Significations in our sacred Writings. 'Tis the very same Word with that in my Text, that we find made use of, in the Case of the Man out of whom our blessed Saviour was pleas'd to call a Legion of Devils: That poor Wretch is said after that merciful Operation, to be *in his right Mind*, which he was far from being before. And in reality, there is just Ground for the Observation, That such as allow themselves in Dissoluteness and Licentiousness, live at Random, and gratify a vagrant Humour, and a freakish Fancy, without any Controul or Check, are not properly themselves; whatever they may appear, they are out of their Wits; they are besides themselves: They can never give any Account of themselves, till they begin to take up. For which Reason the Prodigal in the Parable, who had wasted his Substance in riotous Living, when he began soberly to reflect on the Folly of his Extravagancies, is said to have *come to himself*. So that whatever any of you that may be running on securely in a vicious Course of Life may imagine, 'tis only they that can bear the Confinements of Religion, that really are in their right Minds.

THE same Word is elsewhere render'd, by *thinking soberly*, or *to Sobriety*; and there signifies modestly, or so as to keep within just Bounds, or not exceed or over-do. And elsewhere we render it barely by *being sober*; that is, Moderate, and Temperate both as to Mind and Body. And finally; *Soberness* is sometimes oppos'd to *Madness* or *Distraction*; as when St. *Paul* told *Festus* he was not mad, but spake forth the Words both of Truth and *Soberness*: And at other Times 'tis oppos'd to *Intemperance* which is no better than a moral *Madness*.

AS to my Text, St. *Hierom* renders it thus: *exhort Young Men to be soberminded*, that is, says he, that

Mark v.
15.
Luke viii.
35.

Luke xv.
17.

Rom. xii.
3.

1 Pet. iv.
7.

Acts xxvi.
25.

that they be Chast, and that both in Mind and Body; both in Thought and Act; so as that there may not be the least Shadow of filthiness. *Cajetan* renders it thus: Exhort them that they think Modestly. Others turn it thus: Exhort Young Men, to be Wise and Discreet, Modest and Humble, and not Rash and Precipitant, Heady and Fierce, Proud and Self-conceited. And many other Glosses have been added, which I cannot see any Occasion to mention particularly.

BUT it is the true Aim of Words to lead us to Things, and help us rightly to understand what they are made Use of to express. Considering therefore the great Latitude in which this Word is taken both in sacred and common Authors, I must own, I look upon the *Sobermindedness* here mention'd as intended to be very comprehensive, and design'd to be oppos'd to all the immoderate Affections to which Young People are by Nature prone and inclin'd: And that not only to such as are in themselves and materially evil, but even those also which to a certain Degree are allowable, and only become Irregular by being excessive in their Measure. Nor can I see any Occasion for Wondring, that that Temperance, Moderation and Sobriety, which is so necessary in every Age of Life, should be particularly press'd on those that are in the Bloom of Youth, by Reason that it is so well known, and so manifest by general Experience, that the natural Heat of their Blood and Vigour of their Spirits, join'd with their want of Experience, exposes them in that Age peculiarly, to Pride and Lust, to Passion and Rashness, and to immoderate Pleasures, and foolish Exorbitancies. In their Case therefore is a Caveat most needful; and they are to be closely dealt with. What is requisite for all without Exception, is peculiarly needful for such as are so inclin'd, and so beset and expos'd as they are. It cannot therefore but be Time well Spent to take as distinct a View as can be brought within a narrow Compass, of the *Sobermindedness* recommended to them.

AND the best General Notion I can give you of it is this; 'Tis an holy Composure and Settled-

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ness of Soul, that arises from the Sway born by the enlighten'd Understanding over the Will and Affections, the Appetites and Passions, and inclines to a steady Discharge of our Threefold Duty, to the Blessed GOD, our Neighbours, and Ourselves. And this at once takes in all the several Senses of the Word I have been mentioning, without excluding any others that we could have any Reason to add.

IT may be consider'd either *Negatively*, or *Positively*.

SOBERMINDEDNESS consider'd *Negatively*, implies a stated avoiding of all those Pleasures, Alienations, and Diversions, which most usually obstruct the Love of GOD, and his Fear, Honour and Service; a curbing of all Propensions to break the Laws either of Justice or Charity; and a careful Guarding against any Indulgence of our sensual Appetites, to the Hurt and Prejudice of our rational Nature.

SOBERMINDEDNESS consider'd *positively*, affects the inward Dispositions of the Soul, and the outward Carriage that arises thence, and supposes an habitual Regulation of both; particularly with regard to Matters of Pleasure, in which the Youthful-Age is peculiarly inclin'd to run to Excess. It intimates such Self-Government kept in Exercise, as carries out to a general Subjection and Submission to the Great GOD; and to a charitable, righteous, peaceable, modest, and condescending Temper and Carriage towards those with whom we live in Society, and an agreeable Deportment, in those special Relations, which arise from peculiar Links and Ties; and to Self-denial, as to all those sensual Gratifications which Reason reclaims against, and which our higher Interests forbid; and a contented keeping within those Bounds and Limits, to which either a well-enlighten'd Conscience, or the positive Law of GOD confines us.

AND therefore this *Sobermindedness*, is directly oppos'd to presumptuous Arrogance, curious Prying into Things unreveal'd, bold Determinations in divine Matters upon uncertain Grounds, Querulousness, Murmuring and Repining at the Dispensations

ons of GOD's Providence, and other such-like Vices, as inconsistent with our Duty to GOD: 'Tis opposite to Selfishness, Censoriousness, Covetousness, Fraudulency, Malice, Rancour and Revenge, and groundless Jealousies, and evil Surmises, as inconsistent with our Duty to our Neighbours: And it is also opposite to Gluttony and Drunkenness, Lust and Wantonness, Pride and Haughtiness, Obstinacy and Headiness, as inconsistent with our Duty to our ourselves.

ON the other Side it implies and carries in it a great variety of Vertues and Graces. It comprehends an holy Dread of the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven and Earth; a riveted Awe of his Greatness, Power and Justice, and a free Resignation of our Faith to his Revelation in Matters of Doctrine, our Wills to his Laws in Matters of Practice, and our Bodies, Souls and Concerns to the Management and Conduct of his Providence and Grace, and other such-like Dispositions with Reference to GOD: It includes also an universal Benevolence, Peaceableness and Candour, together with an unaffected Beneficence, Open-heartedness and Integrity, and other such-like Dispositions with reference to our Neighbours: And it withal takes in, Humility, Temperance and Moderation, in our Sentiments, and in our Desires, and Love, and Joy, in all our Motions, and in all our Enjoyments, with reference to ourselves. And if we'll but take Matters thus, we cannot well be at a Loss, about the Nature of this *Sobermindedness*, or be to seek about the Duty, to which young Men are here order'd to be exhorted.

THAT I may give you the Sum of the Matter plainly, and in a few Words, When young Men are press'd to be *Soberminded*, the Meaning is, that they should endeavour continually to keep the Great GOD in their Eyes. and like those that are absolutely subject to Him, and entirely dependent upon Him; that they do to others as they would themselves be done unto; be contented with what is sufficient; be sensible of their natural Meanness, and their sinful Vileness, Weakness and Deformity; and think modestly of themselves, and charitably of others; be wary and advis'd, and not rash and

precipitant in any Motions of Consequence; resist the Importunities of Sense when Reason makes Oppetition, possess their Vessels, that is, their Bodies, in Sanctification and Honour, and not in the Passions of furious and unbridled Desires; refrain from all those Excesses of bodily Pleasure, (whether the Excess lie in the Matter, Manner, Measure, or Timing of it) as would disorder our superior Powers, weaken, and debase, and dispirit our Minds, and unfit us for those Rational, and Manly, and Christian Graces which we are call'd to.

THIS, and all this, is plain Duty, and here order'd to be the Matter of an Exhortation to those that are yet in the Morning of their Days. All this is plainly prov'd to be your Duty, by Reason and Revelation both; nor can any of you produce a just, a reasonable, or a valid Objection against it, or any Part of it. But this takes in too large a Compass, to be distinctly treated of in a single Discourse. And therefore I'll content myself, with infixing a little upon Sobriety, or *Sobermindedness*, as it contains particularly that Duty that concerns ourselves, in the Matters of Meat and Drink, and Pleasures, and Thoughts: And so it comprizes the Duties of *Temperance*, *Chastity*, *Humility* and *Modesty*.

1. THEN, Sobermindedness most undoubtedly takes in Temperance. And this implies a moderate Use of Meat and Drink, so as may best consist with our Health, and not hinder but assist the Soul in the Service of GOD, by its giving us that Support that is necessary, and ministring to our Cheerfulness and Refreshment. Young Men need to be press'd to this, because they are very apt to be assur'd by what is grateful to Sense, without considering or observing the Snare that is laid for them, or being capable almost of being persuaded, that intemperate Excesses do so beset the Mind, and impair the Health, and weaken the Strength and Vigor of the Body, as they do in reality.

2. *SOBERMINDEDNESS* also takes in *Chastity*. And this implies a Suppression of all such Desires of lustful Pleasure, as are irregular, either because they are nor within the Protection of Marriage, or within the Order of Nature, or within the
Moderation

Moderation of Christian Modesty; and a keeping both the Body and Soul pure in that State wherein GOD hath plac'd it, whether of the Single or the Marry'd Life. And here I am well-assur'd young Men need to be exhorted and press'd most earnestly, in the Age wherein we live. This appears most evidently, both from the Complaints they very commonly make of themselves when they come to be sensible and awaken'd, and from the Complaints made by others concerning them, while yet they are not acquainted with, and could not imagine the hundredth Part of their Disorders of this Kind. Having had Occasion to hear much of both, I have often wish'd, that more Opportunities were taken of inculcating upon the Rising Generation, this Chastity and Purity, the Want of which is so great and threatenng a Sin of Youth. I am at the same time sensible it is a Topick of Discourse that has its peculiar Difficulties; for 'tis very hard for any Man. so to order his Expressions upon such a Subject, as that they that are possess'd with an unclean Spirit should be prevented from gathering Dirt from them, and taking Occasion for filthy Apprehensions, aye, and it may be Actions too, which perhaps might be unknown before, but are no sooner scent-ed than they are mighty taking to their vitious Inclinations. The Temper of such Creatures is much like the Disposition of cholerick Stomachs, which change their Cordials and Medicines into Bitterness. For fear of this. I'll not enlarge on this Head, and rather choose to refer to an useful modern Discourse of Mons. Oostervald's on this Subject, which is well worthy of Perusal *

I WOULD only move that such of you as have a vehement natural Inclination to Inordinancies of Impurity, would seriously consider one Thing, which is often overlook'd and forgotten, *viz*, that the keeping within the Order of Nature, is as certain a fix'd Bound and Measure of Chastity, as any that could be mention'd. So that to gratify the

* *Traité contre L'impuretè. A Book well worth Translating into English.*

the natural Appetite of Pleasure of this Kind, (for which when it is but duly moderated GOD has made sufficient Provision) by any Act or Acts which cross Natures Aims, oppose that towards which it tends, and for which it hath provided, subvert the Uses which the Appetite itself is design'd to subserve, and inflame and heighten instead of cooling and allaying it, is most certainly abominable Filthiness. And when I have said thus much, I'll leave it to Confidence to proceed, and particularize where there is Ground, without any farther Descant. I am satisfy'd some of you know what I mean, and I pray GOD you may weigh it, and becomingly lay it to Heart. I'll refer you for the Elucidation and Confirmation of what I have advanc'd, but to the latter End of the first Chapter of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, where you'll find such Exorbitancies particularly mention'd as were peculiarly provoking to GOD on the Account of their Unnaturalness; and an Addictedness to them, is represented as an affecting Pœnal Effect of his Displeasure, and a Fruit of his withdrawing his gracious Influences. *Sober-mindedness* in this Respect is undoubtedly a very great Blessing; and young Men must endeavour after it, if ever they'd come to any Thing, either in this World or another.

3. *SOBERMINDEDNESS* also includes Humility: Which implies a contendedness with that Degree and State which GOD hath assign'd us; and those Circumstances in which he has fix'd us; and is accompany'd with such a Sense of our manifold Defects, Imperfections, and Disorders, as produces becoming Thoughts of ourselves, and checks inordinate aspiring Endeavours, and any Ostentation or study'd Appearance of such Qualifications, Perfections, and Endowments, as we are not real Matters of. And here also such as are Young, have great need to guard themselves, and to be admonish'd by others. For there is a strange Proneness in all, and especially in green Years, to give Way to an over great Self-valuation, which naturally tends to unfit for the Service either of God or Man: And he that is Ignorant of this, must be a great Stranger

ger to himself, as well as unacquainted with the common Disposition of Mankind.

4. *SOBERMINDEDNESS* also takes in *Modesty*: Which moderates the Over-activeness and Curiosity of the Mind, curbs the bodily Passions and outward Actions, and is directly oppos'd to Curiosity, Boldness, and Undecency. Curiosity is in its own Nature the Incontinence of the Spirit. Such as are prevailingly tainted with it, know not how to keep at Home, or be contented with what concerns, suits, and belongs to them; but must pry into the Secrets both of GOD and Man. Neither are they so felicitous or inquisitive about such Things as are in themselves most beautiful or entertaining, or about Vertues, Excellencies and Perfections, as about Things Anomalous and Peculiar, about Niceties, Defects, and Blemishes. Boldness or Confidence puts People upon great Talkativeness, and venting a Thousand Impertinencies in Conversation, upon justifying themselves against all Imputations of Weakness, or Ignorance, or Inadvertency, right or wrong; upon publishing utter Uncertainties for undoubted Truths, and sometimes Glorifying in what is real Matter of Shame. And Undecency, lies in affected Singularity in common Things, a Non-compliance with Civil Customs, a disregard of Publick Fame, and an acting disagreeably to our Posts and Stations, Capacities, and Endowments: From all which *Modesty* is a Preservative; and therefore it highly becomes all, but *Young Men* peculiarly: Who what through Pettuiancy, and Opinionativeness, and want of Experience, are strangely prone herein to exceed all Bounds.

AND thus much may be sufficient for the opening the Nature of *Sobermindedness*, which is the Subject Matter of the Exhortation to which my Text directs, in the Case of the Persons it mentions: And what has been said, may I conceive give you a satisfactory View of your Duty. I shall now as I promis'd,

II. PRESENT you with some Cogent Motives to induce you so Mind and take Care about it. And
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here I have the most moving Topicks to argue upon, that can be us'd in any Case: And they are Four in Number. Pleasure, Profit, Necessity, and the Mischievousness of the Want of what we are exhorted to. And if the Considerations which they will lead to, will not affect and move People, it argues 'em to have arriv'd at an uncommon Pitch of Senselessness and Stupidity.

1. THEN, the Pleasure that attends Sobermind-
edness is such, as that well consider'd it would be no small Inducement to you to labour after it. It may perhaps to some be a little surprizing, that I should make use of that as an Argument for a general Sobriety, which is the most common and prevalent Enticement to Dissoluteness and Debauchery: But so well am I satisfied that my Grounds are Firm and Solid, that I dare venture to undertake, if you'll but be at the Pains of comparing the Pleasures of Sensuality with those of Sobriety, you'll find the former far exceeded by the latter, and that you'd be egregiously impos'd on, should you in this single Respect prefer Vice to Vertue, and Sin to Holiness. I'll grant indeed there is a Sort of Pleasure to a vitiated Nature in a sensual Life: But do but with any strictness search into and examine it, and you'll find 'tis always greater in Expectation than in the Fruition; it never performs in the Enjoyment one half that it promis'd our Hope: And take it at the best, 'tis but a present and transient Satisfaction of our Bruttish Sense; a Satisfaction that dims the Light, sullies the Beauty, impairs the Vigor, and restrains the Activity of the Mind, diverting it from better Operations, and indisposing it to the fruition of purer Delights; leaving no comfortable Relish or gladsome Memory behind it, but oftentimes going out in a Stink, and determining in Bitterness and Uneasiness, Regret and Disgrace. Whereas he that governs himself by right Rules and Measures, reaps all the Delight that Nature hath provided for him; and while Riot and Excess in the frequent Repetitions of it, takes away Pleasure where at the first there was the most of it, and makes Men dull, stupid and insensible, Moderation keeps up
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and maintains the Vigor of the Senses, and their Pleasure, by a natural Consequence; so that it shall rather rise than fall, rather improve than abate.

BUT if we pass from the outward Senses to the Mind, the Evidence is yet more clear and full. For what greater Pleasure can there be to a Rational Creature, that is, to a Creature that was made to be govern'd by Reason, than to find it-
self in the main Respects, to be, and act, and move, as it should and ought to do. When we have said all we can, the great Pleasure of Mens Lives is from the Goodness of them. Such only are capable of a free, and liberal, and comfortable Enjoyment of what they possess, who know how to regulate themselves in the Fruition, and to avoid Extremes on either Hand, and prevent those Mixtures of Guilt and Fear, which will embitter all Enjoyments, let them in themselves be never so agreeable. Such Persons only as have good Consciences, are capable of having a continual Feast. Let but any of you that have made Trial of one Side, try also the other, and then you'll be more competent Judges than you can otherwise be: And I should not doubt on which Side the Scale would fall. *Solomon* had try'd the utmost that Sensuality was capable of affording: And he solemnly declares all to be *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*: But never yet did any One that had any confirm'd Experience, declare the like of Regularity and Sobriety. Withal,

2. THERE is Profit as well as Pleasure to induce you to be *Soberminded*. Nothing can be more evident, than that Sobriety hath many outward Advantages attending it. It promotes, and establishes Health, which Excesses overthrow and destroy. What an innumerable Company of Diseases are the Effects of Intemperance! What Cruelties in the Stomach are produc'd by Gluttony! What Heats in the Blood by Drunkenness! And how naturally does the lascivious Wanton, wear out his own Body, and twist up his own Scourge! So also Covetoudness pines and withers the Body; Envy dries it up and makes it pale: And Pride

begets Quarrels, Contensions and, Wars, and sends Thousands to the Grave together. Whereas Sobriety has a natural Tendency to keep both Mind and Body at Ease, and Hale, and Vigorous, and to prevent those Disorders which are occasion'd by exorbitant Desires, and irregular Motions.

SOBRIETY is also much the best Way to thrive in the World. For it makes Men industrious in Business, gives them Credit with others, and entails the Divine Blessing to crown their Endeavours with Success: Whereas Sensuality, naturally makes Persons, Prodigal, Spend-thrifts, Unjust, Creditless, Unmerciful and Cruel, and so to inherit Nothing, but the Curses of Men, and the Vengeance of GOD.

AND as for a good Name, which is one of the most deniable outward Advantages any Man can reach, 'tis self-evident that the *Sober-minded* are in a fair Way to it. A Man that is conscientiously Regular, shall be honour'd by the most Profligate; and the Temperate admir'd by the most Debauch'd: For Vertue bears a majestic Grace, and carries a secret Awe along with it. So that we may often observe, that even they that sit in the Seat of the Scornful, cannot find in their Hearts to ridicule serious Piety and Sobriety, in its own proper Shape: But they first grossly misrepresent it, and give it disgraceful Names, and dress it up in a monstrous Shape, and then rally upon it, and make a Jest on't.

BUT the inward. Peace and Serenity which strict Regularity and Sobriety produces, is yet much more valuable than any of the Advantages foremention'd, and this is very remarkable. For whereas Sensuality fills with Fears and Jealousies, Expectations and Disappointments, and is like the Lower World, the feat of numberless Storms and Tempests; Piety and Sobermindedness fixes the Soul like the pure Ætherial Regions, above Winds, Meteors, and Alterations, Comparatively quiet and at rest. And if you do but know how to esteem Things according to their real Desert and Value, you cannot but look upon this as a very Cogent Inducement.

3. THERE

3. THERE is not only Pleasure and Profit to be consider'd in the Case before us, but there is a flat Necessity to be pleaded; and where this is once evident in other and lower Matters, it is reckon'd the most convincing Argument, and most powerful Motive that is. There is I say a flat Necessity of your being *soberminded*: For without it, you'll be in Danger of degenerating into Brutes: You'H become impertinent Cyphers; nay worfe, you'll be mishapen Monsters, hateful to GOD, and to all good Men, and to your own selves too, when you come to see your own Ugliness. You'll spin your Misery out of your own Bowels, and make your selves altogether incapable of ever being Happy.

PERHAPS some of you may be willing to please yourselves with a Fancy, that tho' you should lead a Dissolute and profligate Life, yet if in the close of it you do but ask GOD Pardon, and profess your sorrow just, before your departure, He'll take you to Heaven, and make you Happy after all. But no Delusion can be more gross than this! If you give way to such Thoughts, you shew you are quite Mistaken in the Nature of Happiness. That is plainly a Relative Thing, and therefore implies a Correspondence between the Objects to be enjoy'd, and the Faculties that are employ'd about them. Were Souls that are pre-vaillingly vitiated and dissolute, and in love with Disorder and Impurity, admitted into the Heavenly Regions, their very being there would be so far from presently rendring them Happy, that it would rather add to their Misery. For they could meet with nothing suitable, nothing that they could relish, nay nothing in reality but what would be distastful. For whatever may be commonly weakly imagin'd. Heaven is rather a State than a Place. And as for the State of Heaven and Hell, that consists in perfect Holiness and Wickedness: And proportionably as Persons improve in either of these, so do they approach either to the one or the other. For as Heaven is the Centre of all that is Vertuous, Pure and Holy, and all that is Good tends thither by a natural Sympathy; to

Hell is the natural and proper Centre of all Impiety and Impurity, and all that is bad and vitious presses and sinks down thither, as towards its proper Place and Element. Tho' the divine Vengeance should not at all concern itself about inflicting any Misery on such Souls as wallow in Filth and Impurity, yet would their own riveted vicious Inclinations exclude them from Heaven, and unavoidably make them miserable. What could such Persons be able to do in Heaven? As one has well expressed it. *They'd find no Room for wanton Amours among the Heavenly Lovers; no Rivers of Wine among their Rivers of Pleasure to satisfy unbounded Sensuality; no Parasites to flatter lofty Pride; no Miseries to feed, meagre Envy; no Mischiefs to tickle devilish Revenge; nothing but chaste and divine Pure and Spiritual Enjoyments, such as brutish and devilish Appetites will eternally loath and nauseate.*

THERE is therefore a flat Necessity, if Persons would ever be Happy hereafter, of getting their Minds dispos'd and attemper'd to it at the present. Now Happiness lies in perfect Purity, Order, and Regularity, It is therefore plain there can be no Capacity of Reaching it, without that *Sobermindedness*, to which young Men are here order'd to be exhorted. And then,

AND *Lastly*, I desire you yet further to consider and weigh seriously, the Mischief of the Want of this Sobermindedness, and the Consequences which it may be expected will follow upon the not keeping within those Bounds which Reason and the Law of GOD prescribe. The Mischiefs hence arising. are many and great, extensive and lasting. *Voluptuousness* dissolves a Man's Spirit, and makes it loose and soft, and unapt for any noble wise or generous Employments: It is a kind of Fascination or Witchcraft; and both blinds the Understanding, and enslaves the Will. *Drunkenness* quite besots the Mind of a Man; and makes him a Fool in his Reason, and a Brute in his Passions. It causes Bitterness of Spirit, brawling, and quarrelling; and encreaseth Page, and lesseneth Strength. It takes away all Guard, and exposes to the utmost Villanies

nies that can proceed from a loose Heart, an unty'd Tongue, a dissolute Spirit, and an ungovernable Will: And after all, it generally grows with Age, and makes a Man every Year he lives, more a Fool, and less a Man, than another. There's no greater Tyrant in the World than the Lust of *Uncleanness*, which where it prevails, perfectly enslaves the Soul, and sends its best Subjects not only to the Mill, with *Samson*, or to the Distaff with *Hercules*, but to the Chambers of Death, and the Dungeon of Hell. It makes any One effeminate, soft and foolish, takes away Courage and Confidence, and unfits for Action: It hath Shame for its necessary Attendant, banishes the Holy Spirit, and if persisted in, opens a wide Door for everlasting Confusion.

SHOULD I go on particularly to instance in and dilate upon the other Lusts, that are opposite to *Sobermindedness*, as Pride, Malice, Envy, Fraudulency, and the like, which where they are riveted and prevalent, tend to transform Persons into so many ungovernable Furies, I should soon be carry'd beyond all Bounds. But this we may observe concerning them all in common. That they have a great deal of Uneasiness and Disquiet attending 'em. For in every sensual Course, be it what it will, the Mind is disturb'd, the Conscience gall'd, the Affections divided into opposite Parties and Factions, and the whole Soul in a most diseas'd and restless Posture. For any such Course is in its own Nature plainly Unreasonable; and therefore a Man's Frame and Constitution, as he is a Rational Being, therein suffers an unnatural Violence, and is unjointed and disorder'd: And from hence arises that Distress of Mind and Anguish of Conscience, , with which the Sinner is disturb'd, which the Soberminded Person would not feel or be under for all the World.

NAY, it ought further also to be consider'd. That if Persons are not Soberminded while they are Young, 'tis an hundred to one but they'll smart for it if they live to Old-age, and come to be advanc'd in Years. It is the Case of
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Job. xx.
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many a Profligate Person, *that his Bones are full of the Sins of his Youth, which shall lie down with him in the Dust*, which has something in it that is peculiarly affecting. Now there is no such. Preservative from all these Mischiefs as an universal Sobriety in Temper and Carriage. And if all this be not sufficient to move and work upon you, I despair of adding any Thing that I could see any Reason to hope would have any good Effect. But now,

III. SUPPOSING that some of you at least are by this Time convinc'd that it is both your Duty and Interest to labour after that Sobermindedness to which it is here order'd that young Men should be exhorted,. I shall proceed to add a few Directions, by Way of Advice, about the managing your Endeavours in the Case in such a Manner, as that there may. be the greatest Hope of succeeding. And they are such as these.

1. OF all Things beware of vicious Habits. The sensual Part is, naturally strong in all, and they, that most strictly observe themselves will find it so: And for that Reason it the more concerns us to take Care that it get not the usual Victory. Habits stick close, and are not easily matter'd and extirpated. Give but a little Way to the Flesh, and you'll soon find that 'twill grow Strong and Insolent, and attempt to play the Tyrant. Being warm'd, with the Snake in the Fable, 'twill, begin to hiss, and gather Poison, and Bite and Sting. Give not Way therefore to any vitious Inclinations, as you would not have them grow up into Habits. The longer you delay to curb and matter them, the harder will your Work be. If you once gratify your Appetites beyond Bounds, you'll presently find you must deny 'em Nothing they hanker after: Nay, sometimes you'll be forc'd even to destroy Appetite itself, by driving to please it. Learn therefore to bear a Check as soon as may be.

2. CAREFULLY avoid all such Things as are insinuating, ensnaring, and weakning, as you would not have the Reins quite pull'd out of your
Hands.

Hands. Shun bad Examples, loose Companions, and evil Communications which corrupt good Manners. Converse not familiarly, frequently or unnecessarily, with such as banter Religion, and ridicule the Holy Scriptures, and are continually starting Objections against the Mysteries of our Faith: Neither let; such as use themselves to Drink to Excess, or run into any other Exorbitancies, be the Persons whom you contract any Thing of a particular Friendship with, least 'ere you are aware you run into their Disorders, and learn to be like them. Such Things as these may lie easily observ'd to be very infecting and catching, especially in some Constitutions. Endeavour to understand your own weakest Side, and what Sort of Excesses you might the most easily be allur'd and drawn into, and there keep a particular Guard, in all the Company you converse with. And watch with Strictness against surrounding Temptations, as you would not be overset.

3. IN such Things as are in themselves lawful, take your Measures from your Reason I and not from your Appetites. Reason will tell you, that any Degree of Pleasure that would impair the Health and Vigor of your Natures, abate your Fitness for the Service of GOD, and your Chearfulness in the Work of your Callings, is unbecoming, and to be abhor'd. Let that therefore be a fixed Boundary, with you, as unalterable as the Laws of the Medes and Persians were accounted in ancient Times Use Pleasure of any Sort, as the Traveller does Water, not as the Drunkard Wine: Whereby he is so far from Satisfying his Appetite, that he is the more inflam'd, and does, but excite the greater Thirst.

4. BE daily Conversant with the Word of GOD. Should any of you propose that important Question, *wherewithall shall a Young Man cleanse his Way?* There's no better Answer than *David* gives to it in short, when he says, *By taking Heed thereto, according to thy Word.* The Sacred and Heavenly Oracles we have in our Hands were given us as a Directory. Consulting them, we shall find what GOD approves, and what he abhors; what

Psal. cxix.
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what would become us, and what would be disgraceful; what is confident with, Sobriety, and what not; what to pursue, and what to shun. You are there also pointed to suitable Remedies against those Disorders that are most apt to prevail in you; and particularly, admonish'd, to be continually striking at the Root and Spring of all, which is a carnal fleshly Nature, which where it is predominant, is continually calling forth Mire and Dirt. Be well acquainted therefore with your Rule. Meditate upon it Day and Night. Take the written Word as a Light unto your Feet, and a Lanthorn to your Paths, according to its Original Design, and you need, not fear any dangerous or pernicious Excesses.

5. STUDY the Providence of GOD. Carefully observe the Course and Steps of it, and you'll find a great many useful Instructions convey'd. Among other Things, you may this Way be effectually taught, the Vanity of the World, the Folly of Sin, the dismal Fruits of Intemperance and Looseness, and the Tragical Issue of Extravagance. Did you never hear of any whose Beginnings in Sin were small, who yet made a gradual Advance from one Piece of Wickedness to another, till they became incurably harden'd, and so at length their Sin found them out, remarkably shorten'd their Days, and brought them to an untimely End? Did you never hear of remarkable Judgments pursuing those who were not to be reclaimed from their vitious Courses, by the Advice of Parents, the Admonitions of Matters, Friends and Ministers, or the Checks of their own Consciences? Did you never hear of the bitter Complaints that such have made when they have been dying and leaving the World? How they have bewail'd their Folly, and *when their Flesh and Body has been, consum'd, have cry'd out, How have we hated Instruction, and despis'd Reproof! not obeying the Voice of our Teachers, nor inclining our Ears to them that instructed us!* And how freely and earnestly they have given Warning to others to forbear tread-
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ing in their Steps, as they would not be ruin'd for ever.

ALL such Things ought heedfully to be observ'd, treasur'd up in the Memory and recollected, and seriously ruminated on, and laid to Heart, as having a great Tendency to awaken Convince and Reclaim.

I HAVE this Piece of Advice to give you among others, and you may be able to remember and follow it without much Difficulty. If you know any one that has been debauch'd Loose and Profane, Intemperate and Lascivious, or remarkable for any Vice, that comes to be in the near Prospect of Eternity, and is at the same Time sensible and awaken'd; do what you can to convert with him. Try how his Pulse beats, and sound him as to his Resentments. Ask him what he thinks now of *Sobermindedness* and Intemperance, Regularity and Looseness? You'll find him, 'tis very likely, free in his Discourse, and feeling in his Resentments. And what is said by such an One, and at such a Time, may make Impression, when other Things won't. There's no undertaking that even any Thing of this Kind shall have a saving Effect, but it has a plain Tendency to make deep Impression: And I am of Opinion, that some have been this Way reclaim'd; which is Encouragement sufficient for us to make Trial of the same Method as we have Opportunity.

6. DWELL much at Home. Often confer and commune with your own Hearts in Secret. Examine yourselves about your Carriage, and call yourselves to Account. Exercise Authority over your Inferiour faculties, and Charge them to be Subject. Whatever you Neglect or Overlook, Study your own Case. Don't pretend to be concern'd for others while you are careless about yourselves, and your own spiritual and everlasting Interest. *Sobermindedness* is never likely to be maintain'd, tho' you are exhorted to it, ever so often or earnestly, if you are nor careful to keep up Self-Acquaintance.

7. PITCH upon some serious Pious Persons, if you can, for your Intimates and Familiars.

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Not only, avoid such as are bad, but associate, yourselves with such as are Good: I mean that are not only free from Vice, and addicted to no Enormity, but warm and lively Christians. If you have any such Companions, be free with them, and engage them to be so with you to watch over you, and reprove you as there is Occasion: And instead of resenting it, take it most kindly from them, whenever they do so.

SUPPOSING you have tript and stumbled, and been ensnar'd by Temptation, and run into Excess of any Sort, don't presently conclude yourselves lost Persons, and reckon your Case desperate. Remember there have been many such that have been recover'd. If indeed you lie and wallow in Sin, I see no Hope: But if you give way to Conviction, there is Room for Remission, and Restoration. Instead therefore of standing it out, humble yourselves before GOD, and beg his Pardoning Mercy thro' the Meritd of JESUS CHRIST the Mediator, and in the Strength, of his Grace, renew your Redolutions against a sinful Life and Course, and double your Guard upon all future Occasions.

9. THINK often and seriously of another World. Ever and anon withdraw yourselves from sensible Objects; retire into the invisible World; think that you are ever halting towards it, by reason that Life is continually wasting, and Time posting away. Think what awaits you, in the Eternity that is before you; even an everlasting State of Joy or Sorrow, the Foundation of either of which is laid at present. Such Thoughts often repeated, and seriously pursu'd, could not but much promote *Sobermindedness*.

10. BE much in Prayer to Almighty God. Keep up a settled Correspondence with that Invisible but infinitely Gracious BEING, who is the Father of Mercies, and let Nothing interrupt it, as you value your truest Welfare, Beg his Grace from Day to Day. Beg it particularly with the greatest Earnestness, when you find you are assaulted. Remember that He alone is able to assist you to grapple with the many Temptations to which you are ex-

expos'd and give you success against them. Keep therefore close to Him, and let Prayer be the Engine on which you depend for Relief. Pray in Faith, and like Persons that are in earnest, and continue instant in it, and you need not fear that your Labour will be in vain. So Gracious is the GOD to whom you apply, that it cannot but turn to a good Account.

AND now that I may draw towards a Close,, allow me a little to pursue the Exhortation that is specify'd in my Text, in a few Particulars that I take to be of great Moment.

HEARKEN unto me, I beseech you, all you that are in the Flower of your Youth. He that knows and sees all Hearts, knows that I am far from having any ill Design upon you, I would only deal with you about your Duty and Interest jointly, I beg you to save yourselves from this untoward Generation. Let others take their Course, live at Random, and delight in Folly: And let them see what they'll get by it in the Issue. Be you *Soberminded*, and learn to bridle your Appetites. And be assur'd this is the Way to please your best Friends, this is the Way to true Peace and Comfort, this is the Way to be useful and Significant, and to be credited and respected; nay, this is the Way to save your Souls.

AS for you that are yet Apprentices, I must advise, and Warn, and charge you to look to this; and my Text is herein, my Warrant, and Directory. Let me beseech such as you to be *Soberminded*, and consider what becomes your Rank and Place and Station, and how much depends upon your regular Behaviour in it, and act agreeably. Be Submissive, and Modest, and Tractable towards those to whom Providence has put you in Subjection. Be diligent in Business, and suffer not any Thing to divert you from it. Be not impatient of your Confinements, lest you prove unfit to be your own Masters. Mind GOD, and your Souls, and Religion in the first Place, as ever you desire to secure a Blessing,

against the Time that you come to set up for yourselves in the World. Remember that by Wronging those to whom you are Servants, you would but wrong your own Souls. Don't look upon your Time as your own, but faithfully improve it for them to whom it properly belongs. Regard those, be they Fellow-Apprentices, or Neighbours, or other Acquaintance, that would entice you to any Licentiousness, as if they should go about to persuade you, to break your Legs, or cut off your Arms, or throw yourselves down Headlong from a Precipice: And let them know that to you it has much the same Aspect; because the Danger to the Soul would in that Case be as great, as it could in such Cases as these be to the Body. And let it be your Endeavour while you continue in the Capacity of Servants, to lay up a Blessing in store, against the Time that you come to have Servants yourselves.

AND as for you that are for yourselves in the World, be you also Soberminded. Don't desire to stand alone, but take GOD along with you in all your Affairs. Remember the Uncertainty of the Things of this World, and that Nothing can be more certain than that you live in the midst of Snares, and therefore stand upon your Guard. Consider that tho' you have no earthly Matter now to eye you, to whom you are accountable, yet the Eye of GOD is upon you, and the Eyes of the World are upon you too; and that according to your Carriage when you first set-out, are you like to be either made or marr'd. Suppose a Concurrence of several Circumstances may seem to favour you, be sensible of your Dependence, and thankful to Divine Providence; but don't think you have all the World at Command, which would argue you to be Children at Mens Estate. Don't affect great Things, especially on a sudden; and if Providence favours your Rising, be content to do it by Degrees. Be willing and desirous to be advis'd by them who know the World better than yourselves. Don't attempt to grasp all at once. Be particularly cautious in disposing of yourselves
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in Marriage: For you may be assur'd that upon the Choice you make of a Companion for Life, much depends both for this World and another too. Watch against Giddiness, Fickleness, and Inconstancy. Think often that you are not to live here always, and endeavour in the Courier of this present Life to act as Probationers for that which is to follow after it. Take Care that Religion be continually minded as your main Business, without which tho' you should thrive ever so much, as to your worldly Circumstances, you would yet find all at last turn but to a very poor Account, and have a most sorrowful and uncomfortable Issue.

AND finally, I admonish and Charge and exhort you all, to give GOD your Hearts betimes, by doing which you'll put them into the safest Hands. Recoillect your Baptismal Bonds, and think of seriously renewing them. Give up yourselves freely to the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who having purchas'd you, has a most indisputable Right to all and every one of you. Don't defer the doing this till hereafter, for Fear least before the Hereafter comes to which you defer it, you be carry'd off the Stage, and in no farther Capacity of acting in your Probationary State. If you are diverted from this, by any secular Cares, any Difficulties which your Circumstances may have attending them, depend upon it the Devil will take care that such Hindrances shall never be Wanting; And remember that you were fairly warn'd of this before Hand. If you pretend to mind Religion in earnest, take Heed of ingaging much in Controversial Matters, which would be apt to divert you from Practicals which have much more of Uction in them, and would be much more for your Advantage every Way. If you ingage in any of the little Societies that are form'd amongst us upon Religious Accounts, see to it that your Ends be Right, and that you manage yourselves so, as that there may be the greatest likelyhood of your having 'em answer'd. If you are Catechumens be *Sober-minded*. Dwell more upon the Great Essentials of Christianity than, upon Niceties; and Endeavour


vour that the Warmth of your Hearts may improve and increase with the Light of your Minds. Take Heed of being puffed up, or affecting to go out of your Sphere, lest you ensnare yourselves, and are bewildered.

THE more of Religion you pretend to, take the more Care of your Lives and Conversations. By them will the World judge of you, and by them will GOD judge of you too. Take Care not to Rest in a Form of Godliness, but earnestly endeavour to get acquainted with the Power of it. Consider that if any of you, who profess a particular Strictness, should fall into any Thing that is scandalous, Religion would on your Account be ridicul'd, and many it may be that knew you might be harden'd. Be not therefore High-minded, but fear. Keep close to GOD, and strictly over your own Hearts.

And the Good Lord of his infinite Mercy grant, that you may be bright Examples of unaffected Piety in a loose and vitious Age, at present; and have an ample and abundant Reward in the World to some. Amen.

FINIS.

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