

“... And Yet be Loth to Die?” Death and Dying in the Theologies of John Owen and Richard Baxter

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IMAGE AND FACTS

The Puritans were gripped individually and collectively by an intense and unremitting fear of death, while simultaneously clinging to the traditional Christian rhetoric of viewing death as a release and relief for the earth-bound soul.¹

This quotation from Stannard's book *The Puritan Way of Death* summarizes well the general idea about how in puritan tradition death was seen and dealt with. Even apart from the question of whether there ever existed something like “the Puritans,” it may be asked what the sources are for the first part of the statement. The conclusion of this paper, at least, is that neither Richard Baxter (1615-1691) nor John Owen (1616-1683) can be used as witnesses to confirm this “intense and unremitting fear.” I'm afraid most of the other

puritan authors won't be suitable to support the standard image either but that is something for other papers and books that still have to be written.² For now we will focus first on Owen and then on Baxter after which an evaluation will be given of their thoughts.

JOHN OWEN

Introduction

An example of the place death and dying take in Owen's work, is found in Randall C. Gleason's comparison of John Calvin and John Owen on the topic of mortification.³ He devotes a paragraph on Calvin's view on the *meditatio future vitae*, but does not write a parallel section on Owen's view. In Sinclair Ferguson's book on *Owen's View of the Christian Life*, there is only one quotation devoted to the death of the Christian.⁴ The reason for this absence is that death and dying are hardly a topic for Owen. His focus is more on holy living than on holy dying, more on the death of sin than on the death of the sinner. This may be somewhat surprising for an author who lost nine of his ten children⁵ and whose best-known works has the word "death" three times in its title. It is less surprising if we consider that Owen's focus is on the death of Christ and not on that of the believer. Living in holiness, rather than dying in hope, is the theme of Owen's work. Yet I expect that a close reading of his entire opus will be fruitful enough for a monograph on death and dying in the theology of John Owen. At the moment we will have to restrict ourselves to his commentary on Hebrews.⁶

Hebrews

In spite of the apparent absence of the topic of death and dying in Owen's work, he does pay rather elaborate attention to it in his commentary on Hebrews 2:14-5. He states: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Owen begins his exposition with stating that this verse supposes four things: "First, that the devil had the power of death; secondly, that on this account men were filled with fear of it, and led a life full of anxiety and

trouble by reason of that fear; thirdly, that a deliverance from this condition was to be effected by the Messiah; fourthly, that the way whereby he was to do this was by his suffering." This all relates to the natural and moral state of unregenerate man. Christ took part in this natural state and delivered "the children whom God designed to bring unto glory"⁷ through his death from this state and thus also from this moral state of fear of death.⁸ When Owen continues to describe more in detail this unregenerate state he constantly uses the past tense indicating that this situation is for the believer something from the past. "They were subject to death ... It wrought *fear* in them; That fear brought them into *bondage*. . . they were subject, obnoxious unto, guilty of death."⁹ I believe here we find the exact reason why in Owen's works we find so little about death and dying. It is not a topic in his works as it is not a topic for the Christian. That is to say, not anymore. Yet he does continue in Hebrews to explain what this fear of death of the unbeliever is and from where it originates.

Fear is a perturbation of mind, arising from the apprehension of a future imminent evil; and the greater this evil is, the greater will the perturbation of the mind be, provided the apprehension of it be answerable. The fear of death, then, here intended, is that trouble of mind which men have in the expectation of death to be inflicted on them, as a punishment due unto their sins. And this apprehension is common to all men, arising from a general presumption that death is penal, and that it is the 'judgment of God that they which commit sin are worthy of death,' as Romans 1:32, 2:15.¹⁰

So, there is a general awareness that death has to do with the judgment of God and even those who have extinguished all this awareness still sense that death has something to do with punishment.¹¹ From this awareness comes the state of bondage: "The troublesome expectation of death as penal brings them into bondage."¹² Owen gives a rather detailed description of the negative emotions this bondage brings forth and how people try in vain to get away from it and from the fear of death,¹³ stating, once again that "this is the condition of sinners out of Christ."¹⁴ Now the problem is that man take this situation as a natural given. "Most men look on death as the common lot and condition of mankind, upon the account of their frail natural condition; as though it belonged to the natural condition of the children."¹⁵ Owen

admits that there is a certain fear of death that is also common to the children of God. "There is a fear of death that is natural, and inseparable from our present condition; that is but nature's aversion of its own dissolution."¹⁶ This natural aversion against dying differs in degrees among men as well as among believers, and one person may fear it more than another. According to Owen this has nothing to do with a lack of faith and thus he calls it, "a guiltless infirmity, like our weariness and sickness, inseparably annexed unto the condition of mortality."¹⁷ Just as one can fall ill or can get tired, so also one can have an aversion to death, but this is something completely different from the deep fear of judgment or the attitude of sinners to ignore death as much as possible. Owen discerns as it were a third kind of fear namely that of those who are convinced of sin and judgment but are not yet freed by the gospel. The question is how much of this fear and this conviction of being a sinner one must have before one may be called a believer. Owen however rejects the question, as this is not something we can do ourselves but it is an effect of the knowledge of the law of God. His view is that this bondage in the fear of death is not a duty but something that happens "involuntary."¹⁸ It does, however, cause a person's desire to be delivered from this situation and thus from this fear of death as judgment and this desire makes one active to live in the communion with Christ. For it is Christ who by his death freed us from the fear of death.

Here, in a nutshell, we find the message of Owen's *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. Christ took upon himself our nature and so he could undergo death and all the fears and anxieties around death for no other reason than to deliver God's children from death as judgment and our fear of death. In brief: "His death was the means of delivering them from death,"¹⁹ which entails that in Christ, the believer is freed from the state of being spiritually dead (temporal death) and from eternal death. What Owen means here, he more clearly states in his exposition on Hebrews 9:27 where he also discerns between temporal and eternal death and how Christ delivers from both.

1. As man was to die once legally and penally for sin, by the sentence of the law, and no more; so Christ died, suffered, and offered once, and no more, to bear sin, to expiate it, and thereby to take away death so far as it was penal. 2. As after death men must appear again the second time unto judgment, to undergo condemnation thereon; so after his once offering, to take away sin and death,

Christ shall appear the second time to free us from judgment, and to bestow on us eternal salvation.²⁰

The fear of death is caused by Satan as he in fact has the power of death in such a way that he can frighten us by confronting us with the fact that death is the punishment upon sin. God did not make death; death was not in God's creation. Instead, it was the result of Adam's sin and it is God's punishment of our sin. Now Satan has a tool to make us afraid, not so much with death as dying but with death as the ultimate confrontation with God's righteous judgment resulting in our eternal death. “God having passed the sentence of death against sin, it was in the power of Satan to terrify and affright the *consciences* of men with the expectation and dread of it, so bringing them into *bondage*.”²¹ Here lies the power of Satan that he can bind people with reminding them that the fact that they have to die is directly connected with the fact that they are sinners for God and under eternal punishment.²² The death of Christ makes Satan powerless as Christ takes away the guilt of sin and thus the ground for eternal punishment. “The destruction, then, here intended of ‘him that had the power of death,’ is the dissolution, evacuation, and removing of that power which he had in and over death, with all the effects and consequences of it.”²³ Now since Satan can no longer scare God's children with death as a penalty for sin, God's children no longer have to fear death at all. As soon as through faith the death of Christ is applied to the believer he or she is set free from this bondage of fear.²⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that Owen clearly views the death of the Christian as no longer a penalty for sin (cf. Heidelberg Catechism.), that there is no need to fear either temporal or eternal death, but that—and here we hear the pastor speak—God's children have this natural fear of death as something unknown and unpleasant.

Richard Baxter

Introduction

There is more about death and dying in Baxter's works than Owen's, which is not surprising as he gives many, extensive directions for all aspects of the

Christian life.²⁵ The title of my paper is a quote from Baxter's *The Saints Everlasting Rest*. In chapter 8, paragraph 19 he uses this phrase even three times in a row because he cannot understand, "that we can truly believe, that death will remove us from misery to such glory and yet be loth to die."²⁶ Also for Baxter death for a believer in Christ cannot be something to be afraid of nor something to keep with all strength away from as if death means the end to all blessings instead of the gateway to the fullness of all blessings. Yet Baxter was aware that there is both loathness to die and fear of death among Christian believers and therefore he wrote a treatise called *Directions for a Peaceful Death*. I take this treatise as exemplary for Baxter's view on death and dying. In the introduction of a separate version of this work he mistakenly says that these directions are also to be found in his book *Self Denial*.²⁷ This is true as to the matter that is dealt with in chapter forty of this book, but the directions Baxter publishes separately were first published in *A Body of Practical Divinity* under the chapter "For the Aged, Weak and Sick."²⁸ To my knowledge, separate attention has not been paid to this treatise although it is highly interesting in its genre and its content. In this treatise, it is as if Baxter follows up on Owen's statement that there is a natural aversion to death, an aversion believers also experience. He starts with saying that we need comfort when death approaches and that therefore his directions should, "make our departure comfortable or peaceful at the least, as well as safe." He by the way mentions twenty directions but finally lists eighteen. Baxter speaks even stronger of "our natural unwillingness to die."²⁹

Genre

Baxter's work, interestingly, is part of a genre originating in the late Middle ages, namely that of the *ars moriendi*. This art of dying well as it was called in English examples of the genre were written as small guidelines for priest and pastors to help prepare their parishioners for death. The approach of death makes the devil active to attack the conscience and the faith of the believer in the hope to make him or her sin against God. These sins would prolong the stay in purgatory extensively so it was necessary to help chase away the devil by admonishing the believer to focus on the triune God, Mary, and the other saints. Martin Luther wrote a similar treatise but filled it with a new theology. Whereas the medieval *ars moriendi* literature had purgatory as presupposition, Luther's starting point was the full reconciliation with

God through Christ making purgatory redundant and opening the gates of heaven for all who wished to enter through faith. His theology of grace also changed the expected attitude of the one about to die. In the medieval works, the subject of action was the believer who must focus on God and the saints with all strength whereas in Luther and his followers the subject is God who brings the comfort of the cross of Christ to the dying believer.³⁰ This reformed *ars moriendi* was described by various Calvinist and puritan writers such as Zacharius Ursinus, the author of the Heidelberg Catechism, and William Perkins whose *A Salve for a Sick Man, or a Treatise on Sickness and Dying*, first published 1595, and still is a bestseller. This new approach is taken up by Baxter who yet brings in elements that differ from Luther without departing from the theology of the cross. Just as Luther, Baxter did not write the work for pastors but for every believer to read and to take it to heart in order to overcome the fears of death so that, "the great impediment of their comfort is removed."³¹

Content

Baxter starts his directions with saying that sickness preceding death may be seen as a mercy, God giving us the time to prepare for death and to make us even willing to leave this life. Sickness, together with the pain it brings about, makes us loose our appetite for earthly things so, "that we have so loud a call, and so great a help to true repentance and serious preparation!"³² For those who live close to God already, "a sudden death may be a mercy," but ordinarily the mercy of God lies in a preparation through sickness. Baxter even suggests that without prior sickness one may be unprepared to die, though he does not address it at this point.

Baxter comforts the one who is sick unto death by reminding him that sickness comes from the Lord, that it is from him who loves us and who knows what is best for us. "Our sickness and death are sent by the same love that sent us a Saviour, and sent us the powerful preachers of his word, and sent us his Spirit, and secretly and sweetly changed our hearts, and knit them to himself in love; which gave us a life of precious mercies for our souls and bodies, and has promised to give us life eternal; and shall we think, that he now intends us any harm? Cannot he turn this also to our good, as he has done many an affliction which we have complained about?"³³ Out of this knowledge the dying believer should, "Look by faith to your dying, buried, risen, ascended, glorified Lord."³⁴

When a believer keeps his eyes on Jesus, he can conquer fear of death since Jesus triumphed over death. Here Baxter brings in communion with Christ in such a way that it is comforting to know that what happened to him will also happen to us as believers. He lists the aspects of Christ's death and burial to say that Christ overcame all these and since he is the Head and we are the body the same counts for us. Death could not hold him and therefore it cannot hold us. This communion with Christ as the head is, according to Baxter, so strong that a believer has at death the joyful thought that he is going to his Saviour.

For Baxter, death for the believer is not a disturbing but a joyful thought. This thought however does not come automatically and Baxter admonishes believers to focus on God's promises. Specifically, to "choose out some promises most suitable to your condition, and roll them over and over in your mind, and feed and live on them by faith."³⁵ Sick people cannot handle too much so it best is to take two or three of God's promises and concentrate on these. Baxter then quotes thirteen Bible verses as examples to choose from, depending on the particular fears and sorrows with which the sick believer struggles.³⁶ So it is the external Word, the promise that comes from outside of us, that brings comfort and joy. Baxter, in line with Luther, directs the believer away from him of herself, *extra nos* to God's promises. He then continues to convince the sick believer that the glory of heaven is so much better than life on earth. Yet it is important to notice that for Baxter the glory is not heaven in general, but specifically the promise of seeing God face to face. Now we see only the works of God in creation, but there we will see himself. "If it be delectable here to know his works, what will it be to see the cause of all? All creatures in heaven and earth conjoined, can never afford such content and joy to holy souls, as God alone!"³⁷ It is not the comforts and joys of life in heaven that make up the essential aspect of heaven, but the *visio Dei*, the vision of God believers will have there. It is not our future deliverance of sin and sorrow but full communion with God that causes leaving this life to be a moment of joy. That moment is far better than the glimpse of God's back that Moses experienced, the vision of Christ Stephen experienced when he was stoned to death, and the rapture into the third heaven Paul experienced. To be sure, these were all highlights, "but our beatific sight of the glory of God, will very far excel all this." Baxter does not say more at this point but refers readers to his *Saints Everlasting Rest*, where he takes up the subject more fully.³⁸

Here he turns to another way of fighting the fear of death, namely, focusing on the fact that after death the believer will take part in the communion with Christ shared by the angels and all the believers who went before him. “It will greatly overcome the fears of death, to see by faith the joys of them that have gone before us; and withal to think of their relation to us.”³⁹ Once again it is not the prospect of being with the angels and the saints but of taking part in their joy of being with God and seeing his face. Considering their joy helps enormously to conquer the fear of death. There is also joy, however, in the prospect of both being with the angels who, “are our special friends and guardians, and entirely love us, better than any of our friends on earth do!,”⁴⁰ and with all those believers who have gone before, who no longer experience suffering, sorrow, fear, sin or death whatsoever. For Baxter the participation in their joy is on a higher level but fellowship with them is also a reason not to fear death and, at a certain moment, even long for it.⁴¹ According to him we can sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and enjoy their fellowship as well join them in praising God. He once again reminds the reader that the highest joy is seeing God and being with Christ but knowing we will meet with all those believers is also an encouragement and a comfort against the fear of death.⁴²

Subsequently Baxter gives a long list of those who we will see and communicate with in heaven implying that he is convinced that we can recognize each other in heaven. He provides a list of persons he personally looks forward to talking to and is excited to know.⁴³ It’s interesting to read his list—though we probably shouldn’t try to draw too many conclusions from it.

That I shall dwell with such as Enoch and Elias, and Abraham and Moses, and Job and David, and Peter and John, and Paul and Timothy, and Ignatius and Polycarp, and Cyprian and Nazianzen, and Augustine and Chrysostom and Bernard and Gerson, and Savonarola and Mirandula, and Taulerus and Kempisius, and Melancthon and Alasco, and Calvin and Bucholtzer, and Bullinger and Musculus, and Zanchy and Bucer, and Grynaeus, and Chemnitius and Gerhard, and Chamier and Capellus, and Blondel and Rivet, and Rogers and Bradford, and Hooper and Latimer, and Hildersham and Amesius, and Langley and Nicolls, and Whitaker and Cartwright, and Hooker and Bayne, and Preston and Sibbes, and Perkins and Dod, and Parker and Ball, and Usher and Hall, and Gataker and Bradshaw, and Vines and Ash, and millions more of the family of God.

Syllogismus practicus

In Direction VIII Baxter addresses what to do if someone fears he doesn't have the Spirit—the same Spirit who gives the believer a desire for holiness and hope. Baxter answers this pastoral need with the practical syllogism:

If you say, I fear I have not this earnest of the Spirit; whence then did your desires of holiness arise. What weaned you from the world, and made you place your hopes and happiness above? Whence came your enmity to sin, and opposition to it, and your earnest desires after the glory of God, the prosperity of the gospel, and the good of souls? The very love of holiness and holy persons, and your desires to know God and perfectly love him, do show that heavenly nature or spirit within you, which is your surest evidence for eternal life: for that spirit was sent from heaven, to draw up your hearts, and fit you for it; and God does not give you such natures, and desires, and preparations in vain.

So if one doubts having the Spirit he can fight this doubt by looking at his desire to live according to God's will, a desire that can only come from the Holy Spirit in one's heart. Second to noticing the desire is the fact of living holy. This means that not only the attempt to live as a Christian but even the attempt itself is an assurance of God's Spirit working in you, and thus the assurance of passing over to eternal life with God at the time of death. He encourages the dying believer to, "Look also to the testimony of a holy life."⁴⁴ Baxter knows that the person hearing his words will likely respond by saying that his personal holiness falls far short of what it could be and that he is full of sin and failure. Such a reply is met with the observation that whatever holiness one does find can only come from God. God, therefore, is at work in you and he will reward you for very good he sees in you, which is all a work of God's grace in the believer. Baxter calls the good or the holiness that is in us "evangelical righteousness" that consists in innocence, or freedom from the curse of the law, as opposed to "legal righteousness."⁴⁵ This evangelical righteousness is based on the merits of Christ and is a righteousness distributed to us, but which is nevertheless present in the life of the believer. It is to this righteousness that the believer must look if there is fear of God's judgment at death. Believers must not neglect the comfort God gives in the work he does in us by only looking at our sins and injustice.⁴⁶

On one's deathbed, knowledge of one's sins is certainly a reason for

repentance, but assurance lies in remembering the desire, however imperfect, to do what pleases God. Baxter connects this attention on imperfect longing for holiness directly to on Christ who carried away our sin and guilt. The *sylogismus practicus* should not focus too long on the believer but should help to turn his dying eyes towards Christ crucified and to the gracious God. If we see how good God has been to us on earth then how much more will he do so in heaven? Knowing that will make our deathbed a place of longing, "to go to that God, that has so tenderly loved me, and so graciously preserved me, and so much abounded in all sorts of mercies to me through all my life."⁴⁷

In Direction XII Baxter clearly reprimands the believer who is at an older age and yet unwilling to die. "How long would you stay, before you would be willing to come to God?"⁴⁸ Baxter answers the complaint that life was too short with saying "if you have lived well, you have lived long," and with pointing at the many who die at young age. Therefore, let it not come to a situation that God needs to take us away against our will. We know that we are mortal just like all living creatures. But animals—Baxter calls them "poor brute creatures"—are killed for our hunger and delight in food, but we die, "to live in joy with Christ and his church triumphant,"⁴⁹ so how can we shy away from going that path? As for our body, shouldn't we be happy to get a new one and get rid of that body that is imperfect and full of sin?⁵⁰ The same counts for the world we are in now and the world where will go to. Baxter encourages the dying believer to compare these two worlds and to come to the conclusion that it is a mercy of God to be delivered from a world polluted with sin. We pray every day to be less sinful and more holy, how then can we fear or complain when we can reach this to the full? We struggle every day with grief, sin, weaknesses, pain, cares, doubts, temptations, "and yet is it not desirable to be with Christ? ... And yet are we so unwilling to be gone?"⁵¹

Baxter asking such questions and continues to list all that is burdensome of living in this world. Directions XVI and XVII are an encouragement to take the right and timely measures. "Settle your estates early, that worldly matters may not distract or discompose you." People that have money should arrange on time that a good part of it goes to charity or to other ways of serving God as this richness in fact comes from him.⁵² This counts especially for those who have no children or who have children that have gone bad ways and don't deserve their parents' money. It is furthermore essential to,

“get some able, faithful guide and comforter to be with you in your sickness, to counsel you, and resolve your doubts, and pray with you, and discourse of heavenly things, when you are disabled by weakness for such exercises yourselves.” At the hour of sickness and death, one needs good, spiritual company. All of these directions help to accomplish what Baxter calls for in his final directions: “Be fortified against all the temptations of Satan by which he uses to assault men in their extremity: stand it out in the last conflict, and the crown is yours.”⁵³

Conclusion

Baxter picks up the medieval genre of *Ars Moriendi* in the same reformational way as Martin Luther did before him. His approach is pastoral with a focus on the certainty of eternal salvation; however, for him, it is not the salvation of the sinner but the communion with God that is at the heart of the heavenly life.

Resume and outlook

A woodcut published in 1590 by the Tübingen printer Georg Gruppenbach⁵⁴ seems to confirm the general image of the immense fear some Calvinists and thus some puritans have of death and dying. The person on the bed—maybe John Calvin himself—represents all dying Calvinists and shows them in despair because of the doctrine of predestination, while death is very near and a pastor unsuccessfully tries to give comfort. This seems to be the message this picture communicates, as it gives a number of Bible quotations aiming to demonstrate that the doctrine of predestination is unscriptural. The puritan doctrine of predestination is, especially in the hour of death, cause for despair and fear. Analyses of the works of Calvin, Ursinus and some other Calvinists have shown already that what they said and wrote about death differs quite a bit from this image and now we can add Owen and Baxter to this group. The breach Luther brought about in the *ars moriendi* changing doubt into certainty without losing the reality of anxieties, works clearly through in the views of Owen and Baxter. Nowhere in their works is there even a trace of intense fear of death. The opposite is the case for death is seen as the happy transition into eternal glory. Death and dying are minor topics in their works as their focus is on holy living before God, death is the upgrade from living *coram Deo* to seeing God face

to face. Their views can best be illustrated by a quote from the last letter we have of Owen and where he shows that—speaking like Baxter—he is not “loth to die.” On August 22, 1683 he wrote:

“I am going to him whom my soul hath loved, or rather hath loved me with an everlasting love; which is the whole ground of all my consolation.”⁵⁵

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- ¹ David E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977, 79. See also these articles: David E. Stannard, “Death and Dying in Puritan New England,” *The American Historical Review* 78/5 (1973): 1305-1330; David E. Stannard, “Death and the Puritan Child,” *American Quarterly* 26/5 (1974): 456-476; David E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977. More balanced is the conclusion of Petra Holubová: “It should be reiterated that the Puritan attitude toward death in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century New England was ambivalent and contained both terror at the possibility of eternal damnation and hope for deliverance,” *The Puritan view of death: attitudes toward death and dying in Puritan New England*. Unpublished thesis, Prague, 2011, 81.
 - ² Literature on this topic is so far rather scarce. David Sceats, “‘Precious in the Sight of the Lord...’: the theme of death in puritan pastoral theology,” *Churchman* 95/4 (1981).
 - ³ Randall C. Gleason, *John Calvin and John Owen on Mortification. A comparative study in reformed spirituality*, New York: Peter Lang, 1995.
 - ⁴ Sinclair B. Ferguson, *John Owen on the Christian Life*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987, 278.
 - ⁵ “Owen did not mention...the deaths of any of his children, in his extant writing.” Crawford Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism. Experiences in Defeat*, New York: Oxford University Press, 103.
 - ⁶ Quotations here are from the Goold-edition. See for an introduction to this work: John W. Tweeddale, John Owen’s Commentary on Hebrews in Context, in Kelly M. Kapic and Mark Jones, eds., *The Ashgate Research Companion to John Owen’s Theology*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012, 49-63.
 - ⁷ Hebrews, *Works* 19: 438.
 - ⁸ “1. As to their natural condition, that he *did partake of it*, he was so to do: ‘He also himself did partake of the same.’ 2. As to their moral condition, *he freed them from it*: ‘And deliver them.’” 437.
 - ⁹ Hebrews, *Works* 19: 438.
 - ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 19: 439.
 - ¹¹ See *ibid.*
 - ¹² *Ibid.*
 - ¹³ “And all these things concur in the bondage here intended; which is a dejected, troublesome *state* and condition of mind, arising from the apprehension and fear of death to be inflicted, and their disability in whom it is to avoid it, attended with fruitless desires and vain attempts to be delivered from it, and to escape the evil *feared*.” Hebrews, *Works* 19: 440.
 - ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
 - ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 19: 441.
 - ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
 - ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
 - ¹⁸ “This estate, then, befalls *men* whether they will or no. And this is so if we take bondage passively, as it affects the soul of the sinner; which the apostle seems to intend by placing it as an effect of the fear of death.” *Ibid.*, 19: 442.
 - ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19: 446.
 - ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 22: 502.
 - ²¹ *Ibid.*, 19: 449.
 - ²² “All *sinners* out of Christ are under the *power* of Satan. They belong unto that kingdom of death whereof he is the prince and ruler.” *Ibid.*
 - ²³ *Ibid.*, 19: 450.

- 24 "The fear of death being taken away, the bondage that ensues thereon vanisheth also. And these things, as they are done *virtually* and legally in the death of Christ, so they are *actually* accomplished in and towards the children, upon the application of the death of Christ unto them, when they do believe." Ibid., 19: 452.
- 25 See for example his *A Treatise of Death, the Last Enemy to be destroyed* comprising 94 pages in *The practical works of Richard Baxter*, Vol. 17, 510-604.
- 26 The phrase is also heard in hymn 256 of *A Church of England Hymn Book*, 1879, where it says: "Dead to life, yet loath to die."
- 27 *A Treatise on Self Denial*, London, 1675.
- 28 The directions are in Volume 3, 420-433.
- 29 Direction II.
- 30 See for an extensive bibliography: Austra Reinis, *Reforming the Art of Dying: The ars moriendi in the German Reformation (1519-1528)*, Aldershot: Routledge, 2007, 1-6. See also: Luise Schottroff, *Die Bereitung zum Sterben- Studien zu den frühen reformatorischen Sterbebüchern*. Vol. 5 of *Refo500 Academic Studies*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.
- 31 Direction I.
- 32 Direction II.
- 33 Direction III.
- 34 Direction IV.
- 35 Direction V.
- 36 John 3:16; Acts 13:39; Heb 8:12; Isa 40:11; Gal 5:17; John 6:37; Luke 17:5; 2 Cor 5:1-6, 8; Phil 1:23; Rev 14:13; 1 Cor 15:55; Acts 7:59.
- 37 Direction VI.
- 38 "But having spoken of this so largely in my *Saints' Rest*, I must stop here, and refer you thither," Direction VI.
- 39 Direction VII.
- 40 Direction VII.
- 41 "Is not their company desirable? And their felicity more desirable?" Direction VII.
- 42 "Though it must be our highest joy to think that we shall dwell with God, and next that we shall see the glory of Christ, Yet is it no small part of my comfort to consider, that I shall follow all those holy persons, whom I once conversed with, that are gone before me," Direction VII.
- 43 "I name these for my own delight and comfort; it being pleasant to me to remember what companions I shall have in the heavenly joys and praises of my Lord."
- 44 Direction IX.
- 45 Direction IX.
- 46 "Seeing therefore the Spirit has given you these evidences, to difference you from the wretched world, and prove your title to eternal life, if you overlook these, you resist your Comforter, and can see no other ground of comfort, than every graceless hypocrite may see."
- 47 Direction XI.
- 48 Direction XII.
- 49 Direction XIII.
- 50 "Remember both how vile your body is, and how great an enemy it has proved to your soul; and then you will the more patiently bear its dissolution. It is not your dwelling-house, but your tent or prison, that God is pulling down." Direction XIV.
- 51 Direction XV.
- 52 "And if God has endowed you with riches, dispose of a due proportion to such pious or charitable uses, in which they may be most serviceable to him that gave them you."
- 53 Direction XVIII.
- 54 © Historical Museum of the Reformation. Exposed at the International Museum of the Reformation (Geneva).
- 55 Peter Toon, ed., *The Correspondence of John Owen*, Cambridge: James Clarke, 1970, 174.