No. 117.

On speaking the truth.

8/5/1821
Ephesians IV, 25. “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”

This plain and direct precept of the Apostle inculcates one of the most important duties that belong to man in his social capacity, the duty of speaking the truth. And if we did but consider the matter fairly, it would seem strange to us, that this duty should need any other recommendation than its own value and necessity. To enjoin it upon a man to speak the truth is nothing else than bidding him use the faculty of speech in the office for which nature designed it; for one would
suppose it to be quite as unnecessary to forbid the
word as to forbid the use of firearms or unwholesome
food. Such would be a fair view of the subject. I think
in taking this view we make no allowance for the
incessant action of the influence of the thousand motives
that prevent the mind from inclining the heart. You evidence
of intended man for society with his kind. It is writ-
ten in broad characters on his constitution, that man
was not made to live alone. But what is the chief
benefit of that social state of man is it to be
Discovered? The principal benefit doubtless consists
in the communication of thought & feeling. All com-
munication is affected by the faculty of speech. The
great charm of society, its crowning excellence, is that it
is a communion of minds, an union of the living, think-
ing principle within us. Take away this, if you take
away all that is worth having, produce mankind to a mere animal existence. We might, it is true, min-
ister to each other bodily wants of necessities, but
beyond this it would be nothing. It would be mere
the same dull round of an unimprovable half-
living, half-lifeless state of being. But the moment
you add to this mutability, and then the expression of
the thoughts of the mind; the affections of the heart,
you communicate a spark that, as it runs along the
chains, will quicken, enliven & animate, as it goes.
Now it is the faculty of speech which affects this
intercourse between the mind of one & the mind of the
other. It brings out, as it were, expressible before your
eyes, the workings of the invisible spirit within
man, & transmits the feelings, passions, & social
one to all the rest. Of course, it is of the highest
importance that this mode of communication
should be pure, unadulterated, sincere, that it
should be a faithful representative of the thoughts
& dispositions of him who uses it, so that it should
throw out a fair & just impression of his soul
as passing in the heart. No, therefore, whatever
private, but as it is a great wicked crime. Why is it, then, that men are so prone to violate the sacred laws of truth? What tempts them to practice the arts of deception and falsehood, so that every one does not fear truth with his neighbour? Some the cause will be pointed out.

4. Vanity is one cause of falsehood. The desire of procuring a good effect, of obtaining a hearing, is giving the reverse of those who know us, leads in the first place to statements not exaggerated, but to direct and plain falsehood. This makes haste for distinction in fact the point of a large school girl. He who is engaged by this passion, loses himself in the light that falsehood should be always cordial, not merely as it offends against mean, but as it is an abuse of reasoning. Of one the best gifts of God, not merely as it affects the individual, but as it affects society, not only as it is a
pervasion of false colouring are frequently as true
as lying. A man, by straight changes of artifices,
prevaricates, in speaking of a subject, may as effectually
drive away the very impression to the mind, as he
has given the impression, how can he be excused
from the guilt of a falsehood? Nor is this species
of moral presentation, such a man is detested by the
viciousness of some disposition, or the excitement of some
imagination. He is so deluded, with entertaining
combinations of circumstances, that every thing possi-
able seems unjust or evil. Persons are con-
stantly heard, however, it is in a sort of shade, and
with every thing receives into it, it is put into a new
form, altered, magnified, it is dressed up, it is sent
out into the world. Truth is not fine enough
for him. It wants something more striking in
expressing; his life must be a series of false display.
Fingering existence, in the world, he finds himself
drawn into. Yet such a man constantly loses all dignity
in weight of character; he becomes in time to be
heard with silence or contempt. For, when the head-
ing all his changes of fine stones, having nothing to
except an interest, he loses his hold upon the respect
of his concurrence of the community, and turns out of usefulness,
if not out of himself.

2. Malignant passions are another source of false
word. The man, who cherishes malice, hatred, and
tol, is under a strong temptation to say whatever
annoys his purpose, without considering its being true or not. Envy, revenge are such abhor-
ing passions, that they must be gratified, strong
state, from among the monstrosities which supply the de-
mand, that of moral principle is almost inex-
table one. It is one of the most difficult things
in the world to speak the truth fairly and candidly,
concerning one whom we deem an enemy. Hatred
is a burning, unquenchable feeling; it makes false
like the tiger to its prey,直至 an destruction, inaccessible to entreaty; it is in vain that the
form of candour of meekness comes in its way. if he
it not to gratify its rage at the expense of the

The happiness of an innocent man, it is vain that the virtue of moral rectitude is interspersed to call it back from its fierce purposes; it seldom stops till it has accomplished by any means its dazzling object of pure gratification. Now it is human in by such envious feelings, what can we expect, but that he will venture upon falsehood rather than to confess his guilt? We often discern see them descending to the lamentable weakness, by the nothing worse, of not only countenancing, but exaggerating, avowing, any idle story of deputation concerning these, where on account of difference of opinion or from the vanity of rivalry, we have been brought to believe. This shows itself particularly in that form of falsehood, which is denominated slander. We open the heart, its bounds there when we began by disbelieving, then we are but too ready to encourage even in want falsehoods, to feed on hostility to bring their to expect. Hate these whom we hate. We love the most idle rumors, most unmerited the most inexcused actions, distress of person, the weak intellect, or vanity, then the absurd ingenuity of falsehood turns them into the means of blackening the character of such as are perhaps more innocent than ourselves. In this case, if in any, it may be truly said that lying is always an abomination to the Lord. Other kinds of falsehood affect, perhaps, the property of external welfare of man, but this species of lying aims a blow at what is far better, the invisible, intangible, property of character, and gives death in the midst of plenty, uncertainty of health in the midst of poverty, good or evil fortune in the midst of hunger.

3. Another source of falsehood is to be found in that misgiving defect of soul worth that leads people in the common dealings of common intercourse of life. All good-giving love of gain makes many a man a thief. This disputation it is that produces most of that falsehood so deceiving, by which the cunning imbue upon those who are the unhappy in the business concerns of every day; it is like a fountain, that sends forth its streams through all breaches of society, poison
imagine it to be necessary. A sense of honesty once tainted is seldom made pure again. If the mildest lights upon the plant, it withers away. He who began with telling falsehoods in ordinary occasions, will soon tell falsehoods in day. He who began with procrastination in most statements, will soon learn perhaps, not to shrink from a downright lie, as from any species of fraud. The cancer of the disease goes deep to the fountain of his blood, so the stigma of this good name is never finished. The man who is only so far to blame, for the temporary convenience of a lie to the broad-scale shelter of velocity, who tends to deceive his neighbor by falsehood, instead of treating with him fairly and frankly, is one who is afraid of the light of day, has already degraded himself, and so put the sting of public degradation and not utter falsehood...
These are some of the causes by which men are deceiving from the paths of truth; there are who are actuated by a desire of acquiring power, and who by their influence, such as the habit of hearing still and by habit, feelings, that every careless man makes a man indifferent as to what he says, yet do not please others. Let us now look at some considerations of this to show the folly, quackery, danger of falsehood to mankind.

It has been well observed that "as lies as a breach of promise, so whenever a man addresses his discourse to another, truthly promises to speak the truth, because he knows that the truth is objection." This remark is undoubtedly correct; for truth is the bond of human society, upon truth rests all human knowledge. To truth man is indebted for the happy preservation of his life. For, he is a respecter of the laws, acting without truth, the affairs of the world could no longer exist; as they are men, then they could of any of the great physical laws of the universe were suspended. As truth is of indispensable ne-

The most detestable form in all this odious vice appears in those who assume, as it sometimes does, the guise of religious writers. For the sake of promoting party failures, or of injuring those whose religious belief is deemed erroneous, men have been known to invent or continue misrepresentations and false statements, or on other subjects at least would be deemed a gross violation of the truth, would be deemed a gross violation of the truth, the name of persons and has sometimes been given, but, if the absurdity of it ever came to any person's notice, it would have to associate with education; if there is human, or if lying were offensive in the sight of God, then another, it must be this.

Let us all then, upon so serious a matter, be most serious and inquire, man of God, therefore of every
There are some of the causes by which men are led away from the paths of truth; there are hypocrites with whom considerable care, such as the habit of hearing, still leaves its stamp upon his conduct, as to what he says, as to what he wears, how he dresses, how he walks, how he sits, how he talks, how he think. Let us now look at some considerations relating to the folly, guilt, danger of falsehood, which... 

It has been well observed, that "a lie is a breach of promise;" whoever conceals, addresses his doctrine to another, tacitly promises to speak the truth, because he knows that the truth is expected. This remark is undeniably correct; for truth is the bond of human society; upon truth rests all human knowledge. To truth man is indebted for the happy preservation of this life; for a perpetual guide to his actions without truth, the affairs of the world could no longer exist, as they are now; than they could if any of the great physical laws of the universe were suspended. As truth is of indispensable ne-
cessity in the great concerns of the world, it is of immense importance as it relates to the common daily intercourse of life. Falsehood must have a direct powerful tendency to disturb the order of human affairs, to introduce into the bosom of society every gradation of variety of mischief. It is the

inventor of falsehood cannot know how much injury he may do: after it has gone from one mouth to another, it spreads its pernicious effects much farther, longer, than the first frame of it, either intended or could be conceived. If the man who forms the measure, of the degree of evil which originates from them, be accurately known, but no man when he violates truth can tell of what sort his guilt, where his falsehood will penetrate, or what misery it will create. The may sometimes, it may kill, it may embitter, it may make

parody: what evil it may done you cannot tell; all that you do know is, that it injures man, and offenses God; therefore be every
We believe faith to be the most precious of God's gifts to man, that he who has experienced its sanctifying power has found that happiness in this world can neither give nor take away.
reason, for with God there can be none else in his particular tendencies to individual sins, for all these reasons he has sanctified a warden (truth,) because by truth every other virtue is upheld, upon truth, as the deep rock, stand all the glorious excellencies of the human mind. Hence that same spirit which is called justice to mankind, to God the same of social order is broken as, if these talents of man are used for mutual destruction instead of procuring interests and destruction, as it were as a shield from the judgments of providence, intended, that the dignity of happiness of man should forever rest. Had not the man of falsehood, he who either uses artful coloimacy to disguise the truth, or invents a direct untruth, remember that he was engaged in a most hand of dangerous service. Scripture records an angel in vain in such falsehood, drew down the wrath of the angel of heaven on the guilty, as he conspired the destruction of the Philistines, although the day of miracles has gone by, if we consider that God will make his arm in any special manner to punish the bad, yet the common course of events will do it almost as effectually. These are our miracle to detect falsehood, a fruit of its design. For sooner or later it will find its place and its permanence. All things conspire against it, ignorance, for instance makes a gross chancy fiction or carelessness unite some features in a fiction that is ingenious, and falls with the power of the secret, conscience forces it out of countenance, or detraits it in the light of truth. Of all things, death is the worst of any revenge, at least, it is not in the light of truth, of all things death is the worst. The difficulty of the hand of falsehood, although sanctified by human zeal as well as by divine command, deception found no subject even to perpetual vigilance in the first place, how must be operated upon in a second? The second must be operated by a third, till some falsehood, the long chain of falsehoods precipitates into the gulf of infamy, when it was intended to support. Then suspicion drops his steps at heaven's gates, this most relentless of thoughtless actions are condemed, sanctioned by an indignant world. This is the
The page contains handwritten text in English, discussing themes related to the cultivation of truth and the nature of falsehood. The handwriting is cursive and the content appears to be a philosophical or religious discourse, possibly from a historical or religious text. The text is not legible in its entirety due to the quality and style of the handwriting.
At home, August 5th, 1831. afternoon.
At home, April 17th, 1831. afternoon. very rainy.