A Clothing Discourse

There is no one who hath left House, or Brother, or sister, or Father or Mother, or Children, or Lands, for my sake, and for the Gospel, who shall not receive a hundred times as much now, in this world, and in the world to come, Life everlasting. Words taken out of 10. 46. of St. Mark and 29. 28-30. 10.

The grand promises here made to Candidate, by eternal truth are not certainly intended as a reward to those whom worldly disappointments, sudden reverses of fortune, unkind treatment, unexpected humiliations or a false piety tear from a world of which their hearts continue to be enamoured, however remote they may retire from friends or professions, it cannot truly be said that such abandon any thing purely for the sake of Jesus Christ. No it is to those
only who take you Dr. Gard, actuated by a lively faith & guided by the pure sentiments
of Divine love, heroically make a voluntary renunciation of their earthly possessions &
advantages, their flattering hopes and prospects
and their liberty too, that disengaged
from the alluring bondage of a corrupt
world, they may make a pure obliteration
perfect sacrifice of their hearts and affection
to their heavenly Spouse Christ Jesus. The
magnificent promises of your Saviour you
above Dr. Gard are not limited in
future state or a crown of immortality, with
which he has engaged to reward them.
These who by a generous renunciation fall
their projects, and a sincere contempt of the
gratifications, magnanimously take up
their cross to follow him by the Gospel road
of self-denial & mortification. As they
regard also this life present here he bids
the generosity of the religious soul, restore
its hundredfold reward when by a fervent
cooperation & cooperation with Divine
grace, an increase of heavenly favor is
merited. The counsel of good hope of God
is its foundation as his omnipotence being limited
in its communication of graces & blessings,
by the unsuitableness or insufficiency alone of our
hearts, to receive them. What a motive of consolation
Dr. Gard to you! and with what
warmth of gratitude should not your heart
flow toward your gracious Lord who
swathing your heart to the contemplation
of eternal goods & inspiring you with a
firmness of rendering yourself acceptable to him alone
has also exhorted you with courage to trample
under your feet transitory goods, those deceitful
vanities and baseful pleasures, which
unhappily lead astray the great bulk of
mankind from the peaceful pathway of denial
& mortification so rigorously enjoined by
the Gospel.

Convinced as we all are Dr. Gard of your
faithful correspondence with the divine grace
in forming the heroic resolution of this
publicly renouncing the pleasures of this
world, pleasures at transitory are deceiving
to a Christian soul with all the worldly
advantages, which it failed not to hold out to
it, beloved reader, any exhortation to
prudence in your no less prudent than your
design, must be unnecessary. Nevertheless I shall
entreat your attention to a few reflections on the
nature of that pleasing promise of your Saviour
cited in my text.
In the first place then I will ask in what does this desirable recompence consist. It consists in the tranquility of mind, in the interior conversations, and in general in the spiritual gifts and graces which a bountiful God imparts to those religious souls who by a voluntary renunciation renounce the things of this world for his sake and so are confirmed in the solid security which a religious state holds out of obtaining the only happiness and glory really deserving of our ambition the happiness and glory of eternity.

The only reasonable idea of children of the body, who truly imagine themselves to be gifted with superior lights and wisdom over the children of space, but of whom it may be justly said in the words of the King of Kings: That they have eyes but see not, the dangers impending over them for an eternity, that they have ears but which are impervious to the exceeding maxims of the Gospel: That they have understanding, but which comprehend not the gifts of God, and deny that the hopes of religious are settled on more solid foundations than Thetis; but at the same time they dispute with us the happiness proposed of earthly happiness, not conceiving that a state of daily perplexity, of fatigue, of vanity, and of constant restraint of the passions, can be made easier, much less agreeable or palatable to the restless heart of man, that is always craving new gratifications, that his infinite thirst for happiness cannot be appeased, and that the pure enjoyment, that is to say, an enjoyment that is not alloyed by any mixture of earthly affections, how else does not instantly perceive, that the concurrence of an infinite variety of circumstances to be absolute requisite for such enjoyment, to be the object of affection to a numerous circle of friends, but yet to be exposed to the poisoned darts of malicious enemies, to cherish the tenderest regard for a spouse, yet to smart under the trial of privation, the uncertainties of life, or the more painful wounds of aversion, infidelity, for the parent of an estranged offspring, yet experience the pangs occasioned by want, of the extremity of distress to a respectable family, to court affection by a premium of love and benevolence, yet to meet with insincere coldness, and perhaps persecution, to merit with toils the reward of industry, yet to be held the long cherished hope blasted in an instant by unforeseen calamity. Great God! can this be deemed a state of happiness? Oh! but true it is, that the children of the
Every reader of your enjoyment, with their fears and pleasures. Their point of view inevitably overweighs the sunshine of prosperity. Pleasures are the fore-runners of creation, knowledge, patience, and balance. The objects of friendship, perfection, or virtue are never wanting. It is better to live the false gods, which their delightful world presents to its most ardent minds. In a word, with them, the sense of the pleasures of the world, Mr. Cand. Man only a momentary sojourn on the earth—man whose heart is formed for eternal and unchangeable enjoyment, cannot possibly be satisfied with transient mutual gratifications. Man whose essential distinction from the brute creation consists in his spiritual faculties, cannot perfectly understand a preservation of nature. He is led by passions, which may affect the organs of sense. Man fashioned to the image of his infinitely holy Creator, cannot possibly be happy but by conformity with the will of his Creator and a resemblance (as far as this frail nature allows a resemblance) to his Creator. With the perfection of his Creator, with the perfection of his happiness was from the moment of man's creation, the lot of every mortal, who
gratifying satisfaction of belonging in a special manner to your Redeemer & God, to whom you 
desire to dedicate yourself entirely, without any 
reserve & for whose love you renounce every 
thing that may withdraw your affections or 
attractions from him, you will meet with no real 
obstacles to your happiness. But why do I say 
obstacles? Where every restraining, each regular 
observance, each self-denial submitted to for 
the sake of your Divine Spouse & Redeemer, 
will contribute to your tranquility & interior 
joy? — Who could believe it, my God, did not the 
experience of the faithful spouces of every 
age, no less than the gracious promises of 
us of its truth, that these should make thing, 
the most severe, most mortifications the most 
painful & corrupt nature, besides the most 
galling to self-love, humiliations the most 
trustful to our pride, contribute to the happiness 
from the delight of all those who devote 
themselves sincerely to this service? That 
utterly, itself should become an abundant 
source of exquisite sweetness, & voluntary 
warning of the fruitful parent of greatest 
delights? — O bountifull Lord, who command all 
the oil to spue from the veins of the heart, wake 
& light to breach forth from darkness! how wonderful 
art thou in this matter, and how amiable to 
thy servants! Thou inbriest them with 
joyous enjoyment, which no real evil, no real 
affliction can destroy, interrupt or alloy! 
But let it not be inferred that the religious 
thus has no difficulties to encounter. Far be it 
from one to inundate the idea, yet the religious 
thus has her difficulties, trials & contests; they 
are even necessary to her happiness, because 
necessary for her merit. She would with it 
and consider herself a generous wife or 
child of her Redeemer, if she had nothing to 
suffer for his love, & would regard herself as 
a Reformed or decayed member whom ought to 
be seperated from a crucified head. Suffering 
She knows, forms the brightest wreath of glory 
Her crown, spared by the same apostle, 
that no one shall be crowned who hath not 
fought well, knowing also from her 
redeemer that heavan is gained only by 
violence, she views her little suffering as 
love with an eye of delight, as the holy 
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Hence it appears how visibly different are the light trials of religious duty, from the sufferings of those who seek their consolations in created things. The sufferings of the latter are real evil: those of the former, blessed sources of real consolation. The sufferings of the worldling begot despair, Antony and the monk. 

Those of the pious innate in religious solicitude, place resignation and internal satisfaction in doing the holy will of God: those of the former being generally the opposite operation of the passions, or the avenging chastisements of an irritated God, cruelly sting and corrode the hearts of their unfortunate victims. Those of the latter ruffle not the smooth face of peace: in a word, the sufferings caused by the world yield not the smallest ray of hope, but engendering black despair are the prelude to eternal despair. Those of religion, working for them an eternal weight of glory are invariably enriched by the heavenly and certain prospect of eternal reward. Her innocent foot or her suffering Redeemer, courageously does the religious spouse of Christ tread the narrow road of Scriptural mortification supported by his affectionate hand and animated by her example.

Another essential requisite for happiness is that the enjoyment should be of a solid kind. Among the moralists or the disgraceful gratifications which generally compose or are supposed to contribute to happiness in the world, is another necessary here nor added to my present subject. But with too just reason may I be asked, how is it possible that men & Christians can conceive to be conducive to happiness, what vitifies & disgraces their nature, or limbs & its proportion below the brute creation? How can a soul, whose immense capacity of desires God alone can or ought to satisfy, become content or happy by a disgraceful pleasure, which if not cloaked by darkness, must overwhelm her with shame much more mortifying than any momentary

gratification can possibly compensate? Nor gratification can possibly compensate? Nor gratification can possibly compensate? Nor gratification can possibly compensate? Nor gratification can possibly compensate? Why gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate? By gratification can possibly compensate?
To single out you also to become heirs of his eternal promises while sinners, vainly seeking for happiness in the gratification of their passions, every where experience inestimable disappointments; first trouble succeed to trouble; tempest to tempest, while their hearts, according to the words of the Prophet, "like an agitated Ocean, we never rest. You do not, secured in the house of the Lord, from the wild howling tempest, shall find a real and solid tranquility, founded on the foundation of a good conscience, which will assure you that you love your God and are also most tenderly loved by him. For the fruits which the Apostle of a good conscience are, the peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, yes peace which surpasseth all understanding. No evildoer, ever guided by their judgments by sentinal sentiments, can comprehend how joy, peace, and tranquility of mind can be enjoyed by those who, to be true religious, must be crucified to the world; whereas it is this very death of the passions, this crucifixion of carnal desires, which alone can produce that peace and tranquility that is promised in the hundredfold promised in this life by your sufferings. In a family, or kingdom, peace and harmony prevail, when all its members are united in submissive obedience to their Head, in like manner, placed calm and serenity away the heart, when the passions are submitted to reason and reason is subjected to it. God, Ver. De Cand. It is this very residence, this very torment of the passions—this very constant regularity of duties required of you in a religious life, this very exclusion of all vanity by a modest and penitential habit—this very sacrifice of your liberty by obedience—this submission of your appetites by abstinence, with austerity of life, from the first very dangerous of temptations, in inclosure, will become if you persevere faithfully corresponding with the graces given you, a source of true peace to your soul—it will render you an object of compassion to your God, and his angels will entitle you to the hundredfold promised of your sufferings in this life, and will enable you confidently to say with St. Paul at that awful moment which putting an end to all earthly vanities, pleasures and enjoyments, will become the commencement of eternal and unchangeable life. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, for the rest there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just Judge will render to me.

Allow me to make one more reflection, which I shall do by asking on what the happiness of those who conform to this world...
depend? Yes on what does this happiness depend. On what? Why, on the most unsettled of all foundations, on the success or miscarriage of designs, enterprise, or hopes, the issue of which rests not on human industry, wit, or wisdom, but on the caprice of fortune. I should say on the will of a disposed, but yet unavenging God, whose glory requires that he frustrate the vain hopes of the wicked. On what again does this world’s happiness depend? On the society of friends, on the friendship or aversion, on the constancy of experience, of men equally enterprises, equally exaspering, equally ambitious, equally curious, equally proun, equally revengeful, equally hurtful, equally enslaved to passion as himself, and consequently on men whose interest, welfare, or delight it is or may be to thwart or check all his projects of happiness. No longer then let it be matter of astonishment that no true felicity, no real content is experienced by them, who make not the law and will of their God, their delight, but confine their consolation to the acquisition of vain enjoyment, for which they were not created.

Now need I ask, on which side happiness preponderates? In favor of the most hid, Disciple of the cross, the hidden, chaste, spouse of Jesus, or the toiling, anxious slave of the world? No surely it is needless. Your happiness, Lord, your desires being to please your God alone, who essentially faithless to his promises cannot be false. The hundred fold reward even in this life—your study is your care to combat, to check, and finally to crush those very passions which engender all the world’s happiness of worldlings. Your principal delight being to conform your conduct to the lessons of example of your Redeemer must most certainly be settled on better hopes, are fixed on the most stable, better hopes, are fixed on the most stable. The glory of your God must demand your happiness. The promises of your God must secure your happiness.

Go on then to find in the high road of glory happiness. Proceed in the career of glory. Happines. Proceed in the career of glory. I mean not that false glory which darting only for a moment is succeeded by everlasting shame, but that true glory which destruction time cannot tarnish, or efface, and which receives additional rank, honor, every moment of eternity. Go on to find in the career of glory not that dispicable honor which results from enm, scandalous, or vain exploits, not that absurd honor, attained by the acquisition of perishable riches, or by trembling under great
The holy laws of God & the sacred rights of humanity, but that genuine honor, which arises from the most difficult of all virtues, the victory over your passions, submission to the reasonable & identifying law of your Creator & the practice of every virtue. Go on, Dr. Land. cheerfully advance in the road of self-denial & hatred of the false and destructive pleasures of the world & the flesh, beaten by your gracious Savior & those millions of his heroic disciples. Go on, Dr. Land. courageously in the practice of those holy duties which carrying final destruction to self-love & the passions, and purifying in you the fatal effects of corrupted nature must finally fit you for the pure glorious & eternal society of your Redeemer & of those magnanimous souls who tutored by his divine lessons animated by his example walked undefiled through the thorns full corruptions of a sinful world. Go on, Dr. Land, persevere in meritling the hundredfold consolation promised by your Savior in this life. Go on prudent Virgin, bearing in your hand the lamps of good works to meet your Savior who most affectionately invites you to the rest of eternal peace. "The winter is now passed, the spring is now come, the storms are gone by for ever, arise & come to receive the crown, my friend, and come to receive the crown, for which thy God has prepared for thee for eternity." A blessing which I wish you.