

selfe; looke vnto him in Christ crucified, who is the ingrauen image of the Fathers person; and know it to be a terrible thing in the time of the trouble of thy conscience; to thinke of God without Christ, in whose face the glory of God in his endless mercy is to be seene. 2. Cor. 4:6. If thou wouldst come to God for grace, for comfort, for saluation, for any blessing; come fitt to Christ hanging, bleeding, dying vpon the crosse; without whom there is no hearing God, no helping God, no saving God, no God to thee at all. In a word, let Christ

A be all things without exception vnto thee, Col. 3:11. For when thou prayest for any blessing either temporall or spirituall, be it whatsoever it will be or can be, thou must aske it at the hands of God the Father by the merit and mediatio of Christ crucified. Now look as we aske blessings at Gods hand, so must wee receive them of him; and as they are received, so must we possesse and vse them daily, namely, as gifts of God procured to vs by the merit of Christ: which gifts for this very cause, must be wholly imployed to the honour of Christ.

FINIS.

A GRAINE OF MVSTERD-SEED:

OR,
THE LEAST MEASURE OF
GRACE THAT IS OR CAN BE
effectuall to saluation.

Corrected and amended by M. W. Perkins.



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1626.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
AND VERTVOVS LADIE, THE LADIE
MARGARET, COVNTESSE OF
Cumberland, Grace and Peace.

Right Honourable, the kingdome of heauen, of which the Scripture speaketh so oft, is properly a certaine state or condition, whereby we stand in the fauour and lone of God in and by Christ. And this kingdome is compared to a Graine of Musterd-seede, to teach vs that a man is euen at that instant already entred into the kingdome of heauen, when the Lord that good husbandman, hath cast but some little portion of faith or repentance into the ground of the heart; yea thought it be but as one Graine of Musterd-seede. Of this little graine I haue penned this Treatise in quantitie answerable thereto: and now I present the same to your Ladship, not to supply your want, (for I hope you are stored with many graines of this kinde) but to performe some duty on my part. Hoping therefore that your Ladship will reade and except the same, I take my leave, commending you to the blessing and protection of the Almighty.

Your Honours to command,

WILLIAM PERKINS.

A GRAINE

A GRAINE OF MVSTERD-SEEDE:

OR, THE LEAST MEASURE OF GRACE
that is, or can be effectual to saluation.



It is a very necessary point to be knowne, *What is the least measure of grace that can befall the true childe of God, lesse then which, there is no grace effectual to saluation.* For first of all, the right

vnderstanding of this point, is the very foundation of true comfort vnto all troubled and touched consciences. Secondly, it is a notable meane to stirre vp thankfulness in them that haue any grace at all; when they shall in examination of themselves consider, that they haue receiued of God the least measure of grace, or more. Thirdly, it will be an inducement and a spur vnto many carelesse and vntrepentant persons, to imbrace the Gospell, and to begin repentance for their finnes; when they shall perceiue, and that by the word of God, that God accepts the very feedes and rudiments of faith and repentance at the first, though they be but in measure, as a graine of musterd-seede. Now then for the opening and clearing of this point, I will set downe sixe seuerall conclusions, in such order, as one shall confirme and explaine the other, and one depend vpon the other.

I. Conclusion.

A man that doth but begin to bee conuerred, is euen at that instant, the very childe of God, though inwardly he be more carnall then spirituall.

The Exposition.

In a man, there must bee considered three things; the substance of the body and soule whereof a man is said to consist; the faculties placed in the soule, and exercised in the bodie, as vnderstanding, will, affections; the integritie and puritie of the faculties, whereby they are conformable to the will of God, & beare his image. And since the fall of *Adam*, man is not deprived of his substance, or of the powers and faculties of his soule, but onely of the third, which is the purity or integritie of nature: And therefore the conuersion of a sinner, whereof the conclusion speaketh, is not the change of the substance of man, or of the faculties of the soule, but a renewing and restoring of that purity and holinesse, which was lost by mans fall, with the abolishment of that naturall corruption that is in all the powers of the soule. This is the worke of God, and of God alone, and that on this manner. First of all, when it pleaseth God to worke a change in any, hee doth it not first in one part, then afterward in another, as hee that repaires a decayed house by peece-meale:

A but the worke, both for the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment, is in the whole man, and every part at once, specially in the mind, conscience, will, and affections: as on the contrary, when *Adam* lost the image of God, hee lost it in euery part. Secondly, the conuersion of a sinner, is not wrought at one instant, but in continuance of time, & that by certaine measures and degrees. And a man is then in the first degree of his conuersion, when the holy Ghost by the means of the word, inspires him with some spiritual motions, and begins to regenerate and renew the inward powers of his soule. And he may in this case very fitly be compared to the night, in the first dawning of the day, in which, though the darknesse remaine, and be more in quantitie then the light, yet the Sun hath already cast some beames of light into the ayre: whereupon we teame it the breaking of the day. Now then the very point which I teach, is, that a man at that instant, & in this very state, (God as yet hauing but laid certaine beginnings of true conuersion in his heart) is the very childe of God, (& that not onely in the eternall purpose of God, as al the elect are (but indeed by actual adoption:) and this is plaine by a manifest reason. There be foure seuerall workes of grace in euery childe of God: his vnion with Christ, his adoption, iustification, and conuersion: and these foure are wrought all at one instant, so as for order of time, neither goes before or after other, and yet in regard of order of nature, vnion with Christ, iustification, and adoption, goe before the inward conuersion of a sinner, it being the fruit and effect of them all. Vpon this it followeth necessarily, that a sinner is the very first act of his conuersion, is iustified, adopted, and incorporated into the mysticall body of Christ. In the parable of the prodigall sonne, the father with ioy receiues the wicked childe; but when? surely when hee saw him coming a farre off, and when as yet he had made no confession or humiliation to his father, but only had conceited with himselfe a purpose to returne and to say; Father, I haue sinned against heauen and against thee, &c. and *Paul* saith of many of the Corinthians, that he would not speake vnto them as spirituall men, but as carnall, euen babes in Christ. When *David* reproobed by *Nathan*, did but begin to repent & say, *I haue sinned*: presently *Nathan* the Prophet of the Lord said; *The Lord hath taken away thy sinne.* Of this thing *David* seemes to speake in the 32. *Psal.* v. *I said* [that is, I purposed and thought with my selfe] *I will confesse against my*

1. Cor. 3.

2. Sam. 12. 13.

1. Cor. 3.

Aug.
Hom. 14.Chriſt.
hom. 9.
de penit.

ſelfe mine unrighteouſnes, and ſhow forgaueſt mine iniquities. Vpon theſe words Auguſtine ſaith: Marke, be doth not confeſſe, but promiſeth to confeſſe, and God forgiueth him. Again, There bee (ſaith he) three ſyllables, peccauit, I haue ſinned: and from theſe three ſyllables, the ſame of a ſacrifice did aſcend into heauen before God. Chryſoſtome ſaith, Say thou haſt ſinned, and thou haſt loſted by ſinne. And Ambroſe ſaith, If he ſaid, I will confeſſe, and obtained pardon before he confeſſed, how much more when he had confeſſed, ſaying: I know mine iniquitie, was his ſinne pardoned? Gregorie on this Pſal. ſaith, Marke how ſpedily pardon comes, and how great is the commendation of Gods mercy: in that pardon comes together with the deſire of confeſſion, and remiſſion comes to the heart, before confeſſion breakes forth in ſpeech.

II. Conclusion.

The firſt materiall beginnings of the conuerſion of a ſinner, or the ſmaleſt meſure of renewing grace, haue the promiſes of this life, and the life to come.

The Expoſition.

THe beginnings of conuerſion muſt bee diſtinguiſhed. Some are beginnings of preparation, ſome beginnings of compoſition. Beginnings of preparation are ſuch, as bring vnder, tame, and ſubdue the ſubbornnes of mans nature, without making any change at all. Of this ſort are the accusations of the conſcience, by the miniſtery of the law, feares and terrors ariſing thence, compunction of heart, which is the apprehending of Gods anger againſt ſinne. Now theſe and the like, I exclude in the concluſion; for though they go before to prepare a ſinner to his conuerſion following, yet are they no graces of God, but fruits both of the law, being the miniſtery of death, as alſo of an accusing conſcience. Beginnings of compoſition, I tearme all thoſe inward motions & inclinations of Gods ſpirit, that follow after the work of the law vpon the conſcience, and riſe vpon the meditation of the Goſpel, that promiſeth righteouſnes and life cuerlaſting by Chriſt: out of which motions the conuerſion of a ſinner ariſeth, & of which it conſiſteth: what theſe are, it ſhall afterward appeare. Again, grace muſt be diſtinguiſhed: It is two-fold, reſtraining grace, or renewing grace. Reſtraining grace, I tearme certaine common gifts of God, ſeruing only to order and frame the outward conuerſation of men to the law of God, or ſeruing to bereaue men of excuſe in the day of iudgement. By this kind of grace, heathen men haue bin liberal, iuſt, ſober, valiant, mercifull. By it, men living in the Church of God, haue bin enlightened, and hauing taſted of the good word of God, haue reioyced therein, & for a time outwardly confirmed themſelues thereto. Renewing grace, is not common to all men, but proper to the elect, & it is a gift of Gods ſpirit, where-

by the corruption of ſin, is not onely reſtrained, but alſo mortified, & the decayed image of God, reſtored in righteouſnes and true holines. Now then the concluſion muſt onely be vnderſtood of the ſecond, and not of the firſt: for though a man haue neuer ſo much of this reſtraining grace, yet vniſſe he haue the ſpirit of Chriſt, to create faith in the heart, and to ſanctifie him, he is as farre from ſaluation as any other. Thuſt then the ſenſe and meaning of the concluſion is, that the very leaſt meſure of ſauing grace, and the very beginnings or ſeedes of regeneration do declare, and after a ſort, giue title to men, of all the mercifull promiſes of God, whether they concerne this life, or the life to come; and are therefore approved of God, if they be in truth, and accepted as greater meſures of grace. That which our Sauour Chriſt ſaith of the worke of miracles; *Mat. 17. 20. If ye haue faith as a graine of Muſterd ſeede, ye ſhall ſay vnto this mountaine, Remove hence to yonder place, and it ſhall remove,* muſt by the law of equall proportion, be applied to ſauing faith, repentance, the feare of God, and all other graces; if they bee truly wrought in the heart, though they bee but as ſmal as one little graine of muſterd ſeede, they ſhall be ſufficiently effectuall to bring forth good workes, for which they are commended. The Prophet, *Eſa. 42. 3. ſaith, thou Chriſt ſhalt not quench the ſmoking flaxe, nor breake the briſke ſeede.* Let the compariſon be marked, fire in flaxe muſt be both little and weak, in quantity as a ſparke or twaine, that cannot cauſe a flame, but onely a ſmoke, ſpecially in a matter ſo eaſie to burne. Here then is ſignified, that the gifts & graces of Gods ſpirit, that are both for meſure and ſtrength as a ſparke or twaine of fire, ſhall not be neglected, but rather accepted and cheriſhed by Chriſt. When our Sauour Chriſt heard the young man make a confeſſion of a praſtice but of outward and ciuill righteouſneſſe, *Hee looked vpon him, and loved him, Mark. 10. 21.* and when he heard the ſcribe ſpeake diſcreetly but one good ſpeech, that to loue God with all the heart is aboute all ſacrifices, he ſaid vnto him, *Thou haſt bin ſaued from the kingdom of heauen, Mark. 12. 34.* Therefore no doubt, he will loue with a more ſpecial loue, and accept as the good ſubiect of his kingdom, thoſe that haue receiued a further mercie of God, to bee borne anew of water and of the ſpirit.

III. Conclusion.

A conſtant and earneſt deſire to be reconciled to God, to beleue, and to repent, if it be in a touched heart is in acception with God, as reconciliation, faith, repentance is ſelfe.

The Expoſition.

IF vſt or deſire is two-fold, naturall, and ſupernaturall. Natural is that, whoſe beginning and obiect is in nature, that is, which

ariſeth

a triſeth of the naturall will of man, and affecteth ſuch things as are thought to bee good according to the light of nature. And this kind of deſire hath his degrees, yet ſo as they are limited within the compaſſe of nature. Some deſire riches, honours, pleaſure, ſome learning and knowledge, becauſe it is the light and perfection of the minde: ſome goe further, and ſeake after the vertues of iuſtice, temperance, liberalitie, &c. and thus many heathen men haue excelled. Some againe deſire true happineſſe, as *Balaam* did, who wiſhed to die the death of the righteous: becauſe it is the perpetuie of nature to ſeek the preſeruation of it ſelfe. But here nature ſtays it ſelfe: for where the mind reueales not, the will affects not. Supernaturall deſires are ſuch, as both for their beginning and obiect, are aboue nature: for their beginning is from the holy Ghoſt; and the obiect or matter about which they are conuerſant, are things diuine and ſpiritual, which concerne the kingdom of heauen; and of this kind are the deſires, of which I ſpeake in this place. Again, that we may not be deſcended in our deſires, but may the better diſcerne them from flattering and fleeting motions, I adde three reſtraints. Firſt of all, the deſire of reconciliation, the deſire to beleue, or the deſire to repent, &c. muſt be conſtant and haue continuance, otherwiſe it may iuſtly be ſuſpected. Secondly, it muſt be earneſt and ſerious; though not alwaies, yet at ſometimes, that wee may be able to ſay with *Dauid*, My ſoule deſires after thee, O Lord, as the thirſty land. And, as the Hart braieth after the riuers of waters, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee: O Lord, my ſoule thirſteth for God, euen the living God. Thirdly, it muſt be in a touched heart; for when a man is touched in conſcience, the heart is caſt downe, and as much (as it can) it withdrawes it ſelfe from God. For this cauſe then, if there be any ſpiritual motions whereby the heart is lifted vp vnto God, they are without doubt from the Spirit of God. Thuſt then I auouch, that the deſire of reconciliation with God in Chriſt, is reconciliation it ſelfe: the deſire to beleue, is faith indeede; and the deſire to repent, repentance it ſelfe. But marke how: A deſire to be reconciled, is not reconciliation in nature (for the deſire is one thing, and reconciliation, another.) But in Gods acception: for if wee beeing touched thoroughly for our ſinnes, doe deſire to haue them pardoned, and to bee at one with God, God accepts vs as reconciled. Again, deſire to beleue, it is not faith in nature, but onely in Gods acception, God accepting the will for the deede. That this doctrine is the will and word of God, it appeares by theſe reaſons. Firſt of all, God hath annexed a promiſe of bleſſedneſſe, and of life eueraſting to the deſire of grace, *Mat. 5. 5. Bleſſed are they which hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe, for they ſhall bee ſatiſfied, Ioh. 7. 37. If any man thirſt, let him come to mee and*

drinke. Renel. 21. 6. I will giue vnto him whoe is athirſt, of the well of the water of life freely. Now what is this to thirſt? properly it is, when wee are in a drought or drieſneſſe and want drinke to reſreſh vs, to deſire it. And therefore by all reſemblance, they are ſaid to thirſt after righteouſneſſe, that want it, and would faine haue it. And they thirſt after Chriſt, that feele themſelues out of Chriſt, & deſire, yea long after the blood of Chriſt, that they might be reſreſhed with it in their conſciences. Here then we ſee, that the deſire of mercy, in the want of mercy, is the obtaining of mercy; & the deſire to beleue in the want of faith, is faith. Marke then: though as yet thou want firme and liuely grace, yet art thou not altogether void of grace, if thou canſt vniſſedly deſire it: thy deſire is the ſeed, conception or bud of that which thou wanteſt. Now is the ſpring time of the ingrafted word, or the immortall ſeed caſt into the furrowes of thy heart: waite but a while, vntill the good meſſage to this end appointed, and thou ſhalt ſee the leaues, bloſſomes, and fruit ſhortly follow after. Secondly, the deſire of any good thing is accepted of God, as the liuely inuocation of his holy name, *Pſal. 10. 17. God heareth the deſire of the poore, Pſal. 145. 19. Hee will fulfil the deſire of them that feare him.* What *Moſes* ſaid nothing, but only deſired in heart the helpe and protection of God at the red ſea, the Lord ſaid vnto him, *Why cryeſt thou vnto me? Exod. 14. 15.* And when we know not to pray as we ought, *Paul ſaith, That the ſpirit maketh requeſt by the inward grones of the heart, Rom. 8. 26.* Hence I gatne, that when a man in his weakneſſe prayes with ſighes and groanes, for the gift of liuely faith, the want whereof he finds in himſelfe, his very prayer on this manner made, is as truly in acception with God, as the prayer made in liuely faith. And here it is further to be conſidered, that *Paul* caſt theſe groanes vnſpeakable, and why? Of moſt interpreters they are thought to be vnſpeakable, by reaſon of their greatneſſe, and this I will not deny: it ſeemes neuertheleſſe that they are ſo tormented by reaſon of their weakneſſe; for they are commonly ſmall, weak, and conſumed in the hearts of Gods children when they are diſtreſſed. And the words following ſeeme to import this much: for when it had bin ſaid, that Gods ſpirit in vs makes requeſt with groanes not to be vttered, ſome man might haply reply and ſay, If we cannot diſcerne & vtter theſe groanes in our ſelues, what are we the better? *Paul* addes therefore, that althoough we know not, yet God a ſearcher of all things hidden in the heart, knowes the minde and meaning of the ſpirit. And thus the words yet further afford a comfortable inſtruction to the children of God, namely, that being in diſtreſſe, whether in life or death, if by grace wee can but ſigh, or ſobbe vnto God, though it bee weak and feeble, like the faint pulſe in the time of death; wee, or the

ſpirit

V. Conclusion.

He that hath begun to submit himselfe to Christ & his word, though as yet hee bee ignorant in most points of religion yet if he have a care to increase in knowledge, and to practise that which hee knowes, he is accepted of God as a true beleuer.

The Exposition.

So vndry persons by the Euangelists are said to beleuee, which had onely scene the miracles of Christ, and as yet had made no further proceedings but to acknowledge Christ to be the Messias, and to submit themselves to him and his doctrine, which afterward should bee taught. On this manner the woman of Samaria beleued, and many of the Samaritans vpon her report: and a certaine ruler, by reason of a miracle wrought vpon his sonne, is said to beleuee, and all his household, *Iohn 4.42.53.* When our Sauour Christ commended the faith of the Apostles, tearing it a rocke, against which the gates of hell should not preuaile, it was not for the plentiful knowledge of the doctrine of saluation (for they were ignorant of many articles of faith, as namely of the death, resurrection, ascension, & kingdom of Christ) but because they beleued him to be the Sonne of God, and the Saviour of mankind, and they had withal resolved themselves to cleaue vnto him, and the blessed doctrine of saluation which he taught, though as yet they were ignorant in many points. The holy Ghost commends the faith of *Rahab* when shee receiued the spies. Now this her faith was indeed but a seed & beginning of liuely faith: for then shee had onely heard of the miracles done in *Egypt*, and of the deliuerance of the Israelites, & was thereupon smitten with feare, and had conceived a resolution with her selfe, to ioyne her selfe to the Israelites, and to worship the true God. Now these and the like, are termed beleuers, vpon iust cause: for though they be ignorant as yet, yet their ignorance shall be no continuing or lasting ignorance: and they have excellent seedes of grace, namely, a purpose of heart to cleaue to Christ, and a care to profit in the doctrine of saluation, wherof they haue some little knowledge.

VI. Conclusion.

The fore-said beginnings of grace are counterfeit, vnlesse they increase.

The Exposition.

The wickednesse of mans nature, and the depth of hypocrisie is such, that a man may and can easily transforme himselfe into the counterfeit and resemblance of any grace of God. Therefore I put downe in this last conclusion a certaine note whereby the gifts of God may be discerned, namely, that they

grow vp and increase as the Graine of Mustard-seed to a great tree, and beare fruit answerably. The grace in the heart is like the Graine of Mustard-seed in two things. First, it is small to see to at the beginning; secondly, after it is cast into the ground of the heart, it increaseth speedily & spreads it selfe. Therefore, if a man at the first haue but some little feeling of his wants, some weake and faint desire, some small obedience, he must not let this sparke of grace goe out, but these motions of the spirit must be increased by the vse of the word, Sacraments, & prayer: and they must daily be stirred vp by meditating, endeavouring, straining, asking, seeking, knocking. The master deliuering his talents to his seruants, saith vnto them, Occupy till I come, and not hide them in the earth. *Matth. 25. 26.* Paul vouch an excellent speech to *Timothie*: 1. exhort thee to floure vp the gift of God which is in thee, namely, as fire is stirred vp by often blowing, and putting to of wood. 2. *Tim. 1. 6.* As for such motions of the heart that last for a weeke, or a moneth, & after vanish away, they are not to be regarded: and the Lord by the Prophet *Ose* complains of them, saying, O Ephraim, thy righteousness is like the morning dew, *cha. 6. 4.*

Therefore considering, grace vnlesse it bee confirmed and exercised, is indeed no grace; I will here adde certaine rules of direction, that we may the more easily put in practise the spiritual exercises of inuocation, faith, and repentance: and thereby also quicken and reuiue the seedes and beginnings of grace.

1. In what place soeuer thou art, whether alone or abroad, by day or by night, and whatsoever thou art doing, set thy selfe in the presence of God, let this perswasion alwaies take place in thy heart, that thou art before the liuing God: and doe thy endeavour that this perswasion may smite thy heart with awe and reuerence, and make thee afraid to sinne. This counsell the Lord gaue *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 1.* *Waile before me and be upright.* This thing also was practised by *Enoch*, who for this cause is said to *walk with God.*

2. Esteeme of euery present day as the day of thy death: and therefore liue as though thou wert dying, and doe those good duties euery day, that thou wouldest doe if thou wert dying. This is Christian watchfulness; and remember it.

3. Make catalogues and bills of thine owne finnes, specially of those finnes that haue most dishonoured God, and wounded thine owne conscience: set them before thee often, specially then, when thou hast any particular occasion of renewing thy repentance, that thy heart by this dolefull sight may bee further humbled. This was *Daniels* practise when he considered his waies, & turned his face to Gods commandments, *Psa. 119. 59.* And when he considered the fins of his youth, *Psa. 25.* This was *Iobs* practise, when he said, he was not able to answer one of a thousand of his finnes vnto God, *Iob 9. 3.*

4. When

4. When thou first openest thine eyes in a morning, pray to God, and giue him thanks heartily. God then shall haue his honour, and thy heart shall bee the better for it the whole day following. For we see in experience, that vessels keep long the taste of that liquor wherewith they are first seasoned. And while thou liest downe, let that bee the last alfo: for thou knowest not whether fallen asleepe, thou shalt cuer rise againe alius. Good therefore it is, that thou shouldst giue vp thy selfe into the hands of God, whilest thou art waking.

5. Labour to see and feele thy spirituall poeerty, that is, to see the want of grace in thy self, specially those inward corruptions, of vnbeleefe, pride, selfe-loue, &c. Labour to be displeased with thy selfe: and labor to feele, that by reason of them thou standest in need of euery drop of the blood of Christ to heale and cleanse thee from these wants: and let this practise take such place with thee, that it thou be demanded, what in thine estimation is the vilest of the creatures vpon earth: thine heart & conscience may answer with a loud voice, *1. Ie. uen I by reason of mine owne finnes:* and againe, if thou be demanded, what is the best thing in the world for thee? thy heart and conscience may answer again with a strong and loud cry, *One drop of the blood of Christ to wash away my finnes.*

6. Shew thy selfe to be a member of Christ, and a seruant of God, not onely in the general calling of a Christian, but also in the particular calling in which thou art placed. It is not enough for a Magistrate to be a Christian man, but he must also be a Christian Magistrate: it is not enough for a master of a family to be a Christian man, or a Christian in the Church, but he must also be a Christian in his family, and in the trade which he followeth daily. Not euery one that is a common hearer of the word, and a frequenter of the Lords table, is therefore a good Christian, vnlesse his conversation in his priuate house, and in his priuate affaires and dealings bee futable. There is a mantle to be scene what he is.

7. Search the Scriptures, to see what sin is, and what is not sin in euery action: this done, carry in thy heart a constant and resolute purpose, not to sin in any thing: for faith and the purpose of sinning can neuer stand together.

8. Let thine endeavour bee futable to thy purpose: and therefore do nothing at any time against thy conscience, rightly informed by the word: exercise thy selfe to eschew euery sin, and to obey God in euery one of his commandments, that pertaine either to the general calling of a Christian, or to thy particular calling. This did good *Iesus*, who turned vnto God with all his heart, according to all the law of *Moses*, *2. King. 23. 25.* and thus did *Zacharie*, and *Eliabab*, that walked in all the commandments of God without reproofe, *Luke 1. 6.*

9. If at any time against thy purpose and resolution, thou be ouertaken with any sinne

little or great, lie not in it, but speedily recover thy selfe, confessing thine offence, and by prayer entreat the Lord to pardon the same, and that earnestly, till such time as thou findest thy conscience truly pacified, and thy care to eschew the same sinne increased.

10. Consider often of the right and proper end of thy life in this world, which is not to seeke profit, honour, pleasure, but that in seruing of men, wee might serue God in our callings. God could, if it so pleased him, preserve man without the ministry of man, but his pleasure is to fulfill his worke and will, in the preservation of our bodies, and saluation of our soules, by the imploiment of men in his seruice, euery one according to his vocation. Neither is there so much as a bondslawe, but he must in & by his faithfull seruice to his master, serue the Lord. Men therefore doe commonly profane their labours and liues, by aiming at a wrong end, when all their care consisteth onely in getting sufficient maintenance for them & theirs, for the obtaining of credit, riches, and carnall commodities. For thus men serue themselves, and not God, or men: much lesse doe they serue God in seruing of men.

11. Giue all diligence to make thy election sure, and to gather manifold tokens thereof. For this cause observe the workes of Gods providence, loue, and mercy, both in thee, and vpon thee, from time to time: for the serious consideration of them, and the laying of them together when they are many and severall, minister much direction, assurance of Gods fauour and comfort. This was the practise of *David*, *1. Sam. 17. 34. 36. Psa. 23. all.*

12. Thinke euermore thy present estate whatsoever it be, to be the best estate for thee: because whatsoever befalls thee, though it bee sickness, or any other affliction or death, befalls thee of the good providence of God. That this may the better be done, labour to see, and acknowledge a providence of God, as well in poeerty, as in abundance, as well in disgrace as in good report, as well in sickness as in health, as well in life as in death.

13. Pray continually. I mean not by forme and set prayer, but by secret and inward reiterations of the heart, that is, by a continual eleuation of minde vnto Christ, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and that either by prayer, or giuing of thanks, so often as any occasion shall be offered.

14. Thinke often of the worst and most grievous things that may befall thee, either in this life, or death, for the name of Christ: make a reckoning of them, and prepare thy selfe to beare them: that when they come, they may not seem strange, but be borne the more easily.

15. Make conscience of idle, vaine, vnholen, and vngood thoughts, for these are the seedes and beginnings of a fault sinne in word and in deede. This want of care in ordering and composing of our thoughts, is often punished with a fearefull temptation in the very

thought, called of Diuines, *Tentatio blasphemiarum*, a temptation of blasphemies.

16. When any good motion or affection riseth in the heart, suffer it not to passe away, but feede it by reading, meditating, praying.

17. Whatsoeuer good thing thou goest about, whether it be in word or deede, do it not in a conceit of thy selfe, or in the pride of thy heart, but in humilitie, ascribing the power whereby thou doest thy worke, and the praise thereof to God; otherwise thou shalt finde by experience, God will curse thy best doings.

18. Despise not euill honestie: good conscience and good manners must goe together: therefore remember to make conscience of lying, and customizable swearing in common talke: contend not either in deed or word with any man, bee courteous and gentle to all, good and bad: beare with mens wants and frailties, as hastinesse, frowardnesse, self-liking, curiosities, &c. passing by them as beeing not persecuted: returne not euill for euill, but rather good for euill: vse meate, drinke, and apparell, in that manner and measure, that they may further godlines; and may be as it were signes, in which thou maiest expresse the hidden grace of thy heart. Striue not to goe beyond any, vnlesse it be in good things: goe before thine equals in giuing of honour, rather then in taking of it: making conscience of thy word, and let it be as a bond: professe no more outwardly then thou hast inwardly in heart: oppresse or defraud no man in bargaining: in all companies, either doe good, or take good.

19. Cleane not by inordinate affection to any creature, but aboue all things, quiet and rest thy minde in Christ, aboue all dignity and honour, aboue all cunning and policy, aboue all glorie and honour, aboue all health and beauty, aboue all ioy and delight, aboue all fame and praise, aboue all mirth and consolation, that mans heart can feele or deuise beside Christ.

With these rules of practise, ioyne rules of

A meditation; whereof I propound fixe vnto thee, as I finde them set downe by a learned Diuine called *Vittorinus Strigelius*.

I.

We must not fall away from God for any creature.

II.

Infinite eternitie is farre to be preferred before the short race of this mortall life.

III.

Wee must hold fast the promise of grace, though wee lose temporall blessings, and they also in death must needes be left.

IV.

Let the loue of God in Christ, and the loue of the Church for Christ, be strong in thee, and preuaile against all other affections.

V.

It is the principall Art of a Christian: to beleue things invisible, to hope for things deferred, to loue God when he shewes himselfe to be an enemy, and thus to perseuere vnto the end,

VI.

It is a most effectuall remedy for any griefe, to quiet our selues in a confidence of the presence and helpe of God, and to aske of him, and withal, to waite either for some easement, or deliuerance.

VII.

All the workes of God are done in contrary meanes.

FINIS.

THE TRUE GAINES:

MORE IN VVORTH THEN ALL THE GOODS IN THE WORLD.

PHIL. 3. verse 7.

But the things which were advantage to me, the same I accounted losse for Christ, &c.



TO THE RIGHT VVOR- SHIPFULL, SIR EDWARD DENNIE, KNIGHT.



T is a conclusion of our religion worthy to be considered: That Christ alone is our Mediatour, Iustifier, Propitiator, Saviour, by workes and meritis which he himselfe wrought within himselfe, and not by any workes, or meritis, which he wrought in vs by his Spirit. The Scripture saith thus much in expresse words. Iustified freely by the redemption THAT IS IN CHRIST IESVS, Rom. 3. 24. Hee hath by HIMSELF, purged our finnes, Heb. 1. 3. Hee was sinne for vs, that we should bee made the righteousnesse of God IN HIM, 2. Corin. 5. 21. IN HIM are ye compleate, Col. 2. 10. By his OWNE BLOOD he entred once into the holy place, and obtained eternall redemption, Heb. 9. 12. Again, Christ is said to purge our consciences from dead workes by his blood: because he offered himselfe by his eternall spirit, without spot to his Father, v. 14. And common reason tells vs as much. For if men be mystically vnited vnto Christ, and by this vnion, doe receiue the spirit of Christ, and by the spirit doe good workes, and consequently meritis eternall life, they are then become partners with Christ, and are receiued into fellowship with him, in the worke of mans redemption: whereas he is the act of our reconciliation with God, admits neither deputie, nor partner.

This conclusion being thus infallible truth, it serueth greatly to exalte the grace of God, to abase nature, and to beate downe the pride of all Iustitiary persons and religions. And for the further explaining of it, serueth this treatise following, which I present to your Worship. And the reason of my doing is this: I remember almost two yeeres agoe, in speech you entred into commendations of that golden text, Phil. 3. 7. and withall, came signification of your desire, that something might be set downe, whereby you might bee brought to a further understanding of that place of Scripture. Therefore, to satisfie your desire, I haue here penned a short exposition of it. And I haue further presumed to publish it in your name, desiring it may be a testimonie of a thankfull minde, for your loue and fauour towards me.

Thus wishing to your Worship, continuance and encrease of loue to the holy word of God, I take my leave.
Ann. 1601. Ian. 20.

Your W. in all dutie to

command, W. Perkins.