A Catalogue of the Commentaries and Tractates contained in this Volume, with the order of their placing.

I. *An Expoſition upon Chriſts Sermon in the Mount.* Matth. 5,6,7. Chapters.

II. *A Commentary upon the eleventh Chapter to the Hebrewes, containing the Cloud of faithfull Witneſſes.*

III. *An Expoſition upon the three firſt Chapters of the Revelation of S. Iohn.* pag. 207

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V. *An Exhortation to Repentance, grounded upon* Zeph. 2. v. 1, 2. pag. 411

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XI. *A ſhort Survey of the right manner of erecting and ordering of a Family, according to the Scriptures.* pag. 669.

A Godly and Learned

EXPOSITION VPON Chriſts Sermon in the Mount.

PREACHED IN CAMBRIDGE by that Reverend and Iudicious Divine, M. W. PERKINS.

Publiſhed at the requeſt of his Executors by TH. PIERSON, Preacher of Gods Word.

Whereunto is adjoyned a two-fold Table: one of ſpeciall Points here handled; the other, of choice places of Scripture here quoted.

MATTH. 17. 5.
This is my well-beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleaſed: heare him.

LONDON,
Printed by IOHN HAVILAND, for IAMES BOLER.
1631.

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE,

Oliver Lord St. Iohn,

BARON OF *BLETSO*,

His very good Lord,

Grace and Peace.

THe sacred Scriptures (Right Honourable) are stiled by the Spirit of truth, to be all and wholly [a] *righteous*, [b] *perfect*, and [c] *pure*, yea, *most* [d] *pure*; that it must needs savour of the spirit of Antichrist, to judge any part thereof (as the Papists doe) unmeet for Gods people to bee acquainted withall. And yet I doubt not but that on our behalfe for some respects, a kinde of preheminence may be yeelded to some parcels of Scripture above others, without any derogation therefrom: else the [e] Apostles should have wronged *Moses* and the *Prophets*, by preferring the Gospell farre before them in *glory* and *evidence*. And therefore, as *Paul* gave a speciall charge to [f] *Timothy* of his *parchments* above his *bookes*, as being, though not for matter more precious, yet for present use at least, more expedient; so may our hearts, embracing with reverence the whole truth of God as pure and perfect, in regard of fitnesse to our peculiar estate, cleave more neerely to some portion thereof than unto others: for seeing herein is both *milke* and *strong meat*, who will doubt, but that according to our age and growth in Christ we should affect? But I may not here dilate of this difference of Scripture, and therefore will come directly to that portion of it, *Christs Sermon in the Mount*, which is here explaned in this Commentarie; endevouring briefly to shew some notes of eminence in these three *Chapters*, for which they deserve among all the *Lords worthies* to have the *name* of the first *three*. And to omit the *Author* hereof, though *Iesus Christ the sonne of God*, because the [g] *whole Scripture was given by inspiration from the same spirit*; as also his *preparation* hereunto (though extraordinary) *by* [h] *prayer to God the whole night before*, which must needs import some consequence of great importance; I will onely point at the *manner of penning* this Sermon, and the matter which it containeth.

For the first, when the beloved Apostle saith of Christs sayings and doings, that *many thing were not written*, and yet *some things were written* for the ground and confirmation of our faith, none (I hope) will deny, but these things which were written, were by the holy Ghost judged more behovefull for the Church, than those which were omitted. Whence by good collection it will follow, that things more largely penned were also deemed the more expedient: for why should the holy Ghost in penning be more copious, unlesse the things propounded were (to us at least) more precious? Now search the holy records of Christ thorowout, and see what Sermon is so fully registred as this is, unlesse it were his [i] *consolation* uttered to his Disciples, with his *prayer* unto his Father,

a Prov.8.8.
b Psal.19.7.
c Prov.30.5.
d Psal.119.140. Bellar.l.2.de verb. dei.c.15.par.32.

e 2 Cor.3.8.9. 11.23.28. 2 Pet.1.19.

f 2 Tim.4.13.

g 2 Tim.3.16.
h Luk.16.12.

Ioh.20.30,31.

i Ioh.14.15.16. 17.chap.

Father, a little before his passion: *This* being his *welcome* to them into their Apostleship, and *That*, his *farewell* at his death.

The matter of this Sermon.

But to come to the matter it selfe. This Sermon containeth twelve severall heads of Doctrine, answerable indeed to the number of the twelve Apostles, to whom it was principally intended, upon their calling to that office; although I dare not say, particularly to be applied *part to person*, but rather generally the whole to every one, unlesse it may be, in the last parcell by the great *ruine of the horse upon the sands*, Christ had a speciall aime at the fearefull fall of *Judas* that betraied him. Now the *first* of these concerneth mans *chiefe good in true happinesse*, which is here so plainly declared in eight severall rules, as they lead every man hereto, and give the childe of God most comfortable assurance hereof, even in his greatest misery. The *second* doth more peculiarly respect the *function of the ministery*, the ordinary meanes of attaining the former happinesse. The *third* restoreth the morall Law to his true sense and meaning, which the Iewish Teachers had shamefully perverted, so as now we may make straight steps unto our feet in the way of obedience. The *fourth* directeth us in the *right manner of doing good workes*, by speciall instance in these three, *Almes*, *Prayer*, and *Fasting*, wherein the Hypocriticall Pharisies had spent much labour in vaine. The *fifth* prescribeth that *moderate care and desire* of earthly things, which doth stocke up *covetousnesse*, the root of all evill. The *sixth* reformeth the practice of *rash judgement*, for the better evidence of humility in our selves, and of love unto our brethren. The *seventh* prescribeth *ministeriall discretion*, in the dispensation of the holy things of God, for the *pure keeping* of the things themselves, and the *safe being* of the dispensers thereof. The *eighth* doth *notably encourage* us both by precept and promise, to the holy exercise of *prayer* and *invocation*. The *ninth* doth furnish us to the practice of *justice* and *equity* in our civill conversation. The *tenth* doth effectually urge us unto care of our salvation, by *walking in the straight way of life*, and *shunning the broad way that leadeth to destruction*. The *eleventh* doth forewarne us of false Teachers, who be the maine seducers out of the way of life. The *twelfth* and last, with the conclusion, doth knit up all, perswading us both by promise of *happinesse* eternall, and of *security* most comfortable, as also upon peril of *utter ruine irrecoverable*, with outward profession to joyne answerable obedience, both in heart and life.

Chap. 5. v. 3. to the 13.

Vers. 13. to 27.

Vers. 17. to the end of the chapter.

Chap. 6. v. 1. to the 19.

v. 19. to the 24.

Chap. 7. vers. 1. to the 5. vers. v. 6.

Vers. 7. to the 12.

Vers. 12.

Vers. 13, 14.

Vers. 15. to the 21.

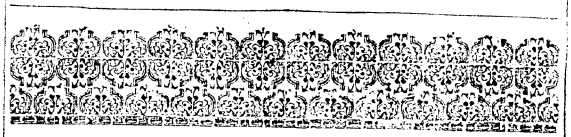
Vers. 21. to the end.

Chap. 10. 7.

Now all and every one of these (Right Honourable) are of that importance in the life of a Christian, that none of them can be neglected of him that with comfort and safety would live godly in Christ Iesus. For the better evidence whereof, I must referre your Honour, with the Christian Reader, to this godly and learned Exposition ensuing; wherein the reverend *Author, of blessed memory*, hath faithfully laboured upon sound interpretation of the Text, to lay downe wholesome instructions for the obedience of faith. My paines herein hath beene chiefly this, as neere as I could, out of mine owne and others notes, to commend unto the publike view, the Authors faithfull labours in his owne meaning. Onely I have here and there upon good occasion (though private to my selfe) added some references in the margent unto classicall Popish writers, for such opinions as are herein charged upon them. Mine interest for the publishing of this worke, I hope I shall approve unto any gainsayer. Now whatsoever it is, in all bounden duty and service, I humbly commend it unto your Lordship, and under your honourable protection, to the houshold of faith. And because I doubt not of your diligence in the faithfull and frequent perusall of it, I will turne my perswasions towards you this way, into prayer to the Almighty for you, that by the edifying of your faith, and other graces of God herein, you may more and more abound in the fruits of righteousnesse, enjoying here much true honour, with long and happy dayes, in the peace of our Sion, and the prosperitie of your family, and in the end eternall life through Iesus Christ. *May* 1608.

Your Honours to command,

Thomas Pierson.



AN ADVERTISEMENT TO THE CHRISTIAN READER, concerning the WORKES of Mr. W. PERKINS.

BEcause the Title of this Booke (*Good Reader*) importeth a consummation and finishing of the long expected labours of our godly and learned Divine, M. W. PERKINS, and yet in this Catalogue prefixed, beside the two former Volumes, thou wanteste some particulars that heretofore were promised, (as his *Exposition of the* 32. *and* 110. *Psalmes*, The *Confutation of Canisius Catechisme*, with *other Sermons*) I thought good to acquaint thee with some reasons, whereby his Executors have beene perswaded to make a finall stay and suppressing of them.

1. They were of the first fruit of his labours, which if he had intended for the presse, he would no doubt have revised long since, as he did some other things, which then he handled and published for thy good.

2 Beside that the Church of God enjoyeth the benefit of other mens labours of the same [a] kinde (whereto our reverend Author had due [b] respect,) the truth is, that the most materiall points contained in these suppressed Lectures, are more largely and exactly handled in his Workes already published. To instance in some: The whole argument of the 110. Psalme, (to use our Authors owne division, containeth either *Christs Kingdome*, or *his Priest-hood*: both which points thou shalt finde particularly handled in the *Golden Chaine*, Chap. 18. and more at large in the *Creed*: His *Kingdome*, in these words, [*He sitteth at the right hand of God*,] and his *Priesthood*, in [c] handling *Christs sacrifice*. And for the 32. Psalme, the points of largest discourse, are *The knowledge of remission of sinne, with assurance of salvation*, upon the *first verse*; which is farre more fully discussed in the [d] Treatise of Conscience, [e] Cases of Conscience, and [f] Reformed Catholike: And upon the *second verse*, the point of *Justification by imputed righteousnesse, and not by workes*: which to thy full content are cleared, in the [g] *Golden Chaine*, [h] *Reformed Catholike*, beside many other places, which I purposely omit. And for the *confutation of Canisius*, what materiall point of controversie can be expected, which is not either in his *Golden Chaine*, The *Reformed Catholike*, The *Idolatry of the last times*, The *Treatise of Gods free grace, and mans free will*, or in his *Probleme*? Nay, I am perswaded it would not be any difficult thing, to note out in particular, the severall points of these forenamed Sermons, in some one place or other of his published Workes; whereby it is plaine, that the suppressing of them is neither prejudiciall to the Author, or to the Reader.

These things well considered, and withall the great quantity and price whereto his Workes are already risen, I hope thou wilt approve of their advice that deliberately wished their finall stay. It may be some will thinke it unmeet, that any thing of this reverend Divine should be suppressed; but let such consider well, what the beloved Apostle saith of the blessed workes of our Saviour Christ, to wit, that [k] *many of them, yea, the greatest number of them were omitted, and those things onely written which were necessary for the ground and confirmation of our faith*: There needs no application, seeing our

a Sadeel. Mornay on the 32. Psal. Sohnius on the 110. Psal. Perezius Contin. of Canisius Catechisme.

b See his advertisement to the Reader, before his exposition of the Lords prayer, in the end.

c Pag. 222. edit. 1608. in fol.

d Chap. 3. def. 2.

e Lib. 1. c. 6.

f Point. 3.

g Chap. 37. & 51.

h Point. 4.

i Chap. 51.

k Iob. 20. 30, 31. and Chap. 21. 25.

An advertisment to the Reader.

our times are more like to surfet with abundance, than starve for want of printed books. Wherfore I hope this may suffice, to perswade those that have unprinted copies in their hands, to use them for their owne private benefit. But if any rest not satisfied herewith, I would yet intreat thus much of them, that before they put hand to worke for the presse, they would acquaint Master *Perkins* Executors with their reasons that move them thereunto: from whom I doubt not, but they shall receive either sufficient satisfaction for their stay, or good leave to proceed in their intended course. Which thing I doe the rather advise, because the Executors have a generall Inhibition out of his Majesties Court of high Commission, prohibiting the publishing of any of his workes without their consent. Now the God of all grace, who is Lord of the harvest, send forth daily such faithfull workemen, and blesse these and their labours for the beauty and wealth of Sion. Amen. *September* 1. 1609.

Thine in Christ Iesus,

Thomas Pierson.

A Godly and Learned EXPOSITION VPON CHRISTS Sermon in the Mount.

Matth. 5. 1. *And when he saw the multitude, he went up into a Mountaine: and when he was set, his Disciples came to him.*
2 *And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, &c.*

IN this Chapter and the two next, is contained *Christs Sermon in the Mount*, preached to his Disciples, and others that were converted unto him among the multitude. Hereof I have chosen to entreat, because it is a most divine and learned Sermon, and may not unfitly be called the *Key of the whole Bible*: for here Christ openeth the summe of the old and new Testament.

Before we come to the parts of this Sermon, three generall points are to be scanned, for the clearing of the doctrine following: First, the *Time* when this Sermon was preached; to wit, in the second yeare of CHRISTS Ministerie, upon this occasion; when Christ [a] had wrought a miracle, in curing the man with the withered hand upon the Sabbath day, the Scribes and Pharisies went about to kill him, whereupon he departed from among them, and went into a Mount, where hee spent the whole night in prayer. And when it was day, hee chose the twelve Apostles: which done, he came downe into a plaine place neere to the Mount, where he wrought many miracles, but because the people thronged about him to touch him (for there went vertue out of him which cured them) therefore hee withdrew himselfe out of the throng into the Mountaine againe, and there preached this Sermon unto his Disciples soone after their election; no doubt for this end, to teach them his will, and also to frame and instruct them so as they might become profitable teachers unto others.

Time. 1

a Luke 6. 7.

II. Point. The *scope* and *drift* of this large Sermon: namely, to teach his Disciples, with all that beleeve in him, to lead a godly, an holy, and blessed life. Although this bee evident in the Text, yet the Popish Teachers have depraved this end and scope; saying, that Christ herein propoundeth a new Law, farre more perfect than the Law of *Moses*: and also delivereth new divine counsell to his Disciples, which was not given in the Law, or in the Prophets. But they erre and are deceived: for Christs intent is to cleare the true meaning of *Moses* and the Prophets, which was corrupted by the false glosse of the Jewish teachers; and not to adde any new Law or Councell thereunto, as [b] afterward will plainly appeare. Againe, there cannot bee given unto man a more perfect rule than *Moses* Law, the summe and scope whereof is, *To love God with all the heart, with all the soule, and with all the strength*; than which there cannot bee greater perfection in a creature. We therefore upon the consideration of this worthy end, must labour to shew the greater care and conscience, to learne and doe the things propounded in this Sermon.

2 Scope. Iansen. comment. in concord. Evang. cap. 40. Bellar. l. 4. de Iustit. c. 3.

b Chap. 5. 19. and 7. 22.

III. Point. Whether is this Sermon the same, with that which is set downe by *S. Luke*, Chap. 6. v. 20. This question is necessarie: for if they be the same Sermon, then will the one give great light unto the other. Men indeed differ in judgement touching this point: some say there are divers Sermons; others say they are one and the same: and that opinion is most likely. For first, they have one beginning and one matter, the same order of preaching, and the same conclusion, as the comparing of them together will plainly declare. Secondly, this Sermon recorded by them both, was made upon the election of Christs twelve Apostles, a little after the curing of the man with the withered hand. This is plaine in *S. Luke*, and may well bee gathered from the doctrine of this Sermon recorded by [c] *Matthew*, wherein Christ instructeth his Apostles particularly in their office and calling: which he would not have done, if he had not formerly called them thereunto. If it bee said, that *S. Matthew* recordeth their election afterward in the tenth Chap.

3 Whether *Matthew* and *Luke* set downe the same Sermon.

c Chap. 5. v. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Chap. *Ans.* In the writings of the Evangelists there be certaine *Anticipations*; that is, some things are set downe after, which were done before; and some things are set downe before, which were done after, as might easily be proved by sundry examples, and in the point in hand is evident for the election of the Apostles is set downe by S. *Matthew* in his tenth chap. upon occasion of his recording their commission to preach: so that this circumstance of the Apostles election, doth notably prove these Sermons to be one, S. *Matthew* setting downe the same more largely, and *Luke* more briefly.

Their Reasons who hold them to bee two distinct Sermons, are of no moment. They say, that the Sermon recorded by S. *Luke* was made on the plaine; this of *Matthew* in the Mountaine: that of *Luke* was made by Christ standing, this of *Matthew* as he sate downe. *Ans.* But *Luke* saith not, that it was made by Christ in a plaine, or standing: only this he saith, that Christ comming from the Mountaine, stood in a plaine place, and there wrought certaine miracles, and then preached: now all this might bee done, and yet Christ might preach this Sermon in the Mount sitting; as S. *Matthew* saith: for the order of this story is this; Christ being maligned of the Jewes, went into a Mount, and there prayed; after long prayer, he chose the twelve Apostles, and then came downe into a plaine and wrought Miracles: but by reason of the throng which pressed about him to touch him, hee went into the Mountaine againe, and there preached this Sermon to his Apostles, and others that followed him.

Parts of this Sermon.

Thus much in generall. Now we come to the Sermon itselfe: which containeth three parts. A *Preface*; the *Matter* of the Sermon; and the *Conclusion*.

1. Preface.

The *Preface* or preparation is contained in the two first verses of this Chapter, wherein are set downe divers circumstances pertaining to the Sermon. As first and principally, the *Author* of it, to wit, Jesus Christ the Redeemer and Mediatour of mankinde, who in the making of this Sermon, must bee considered two ways, even as hee is a Prophet: first, as *the Minister of Circumcision for the truth of God*, as the Apostle [d] speaketh: whereby thus much is signified, that Jesus Christ as hee was man, borne among the Jewes, was unto them a Prophet and Minister in his owne person, and with his owne mouth was to teach them the will of his Father: which thing was requisite for the accomplishing of Gods word, who had promised before to his ancient people by *Moses*, that hee would raise up unto them a Prophet like unto *Moses*, [e] *whom they should heare in all things that hee should speake unto them*: which prophecie was verified in this Sermon: wherein he manifesteth himselfe to be the Minister of Circumcision unto them. Secondly, here wee must consider Christ as a Prophet like unto *Elijah* and *Elisha*, who were as Fathers and Masters to the rest of the Prophets: for herein he doth not only teach beleevers among the multitude, but his owne Disciples also, who were afterward to make Disciples unto Christ, and to build up further them that did beleeve: yea, this instruction of his Disciples, is the chiefe scope of this Sermon.

2. Circumstance: Author.

d Rom. 15. 8.

e Act. 3. 22.

Secondly, here is noted the *Place* where this Sermon was made, to wit, a *Mountaine in Galile: He went up into a Mountaine.* This place hee chose for two causes: First, to avoid the throng that pressed about him, while hee stood on the plaine, to see him and to touch him, because [f] *there went vertue out of him.* Secondly, that he might have a fit place, both for himselfe to sit and teach, and for his Disciples and the multitude attentively and orderly to heare and learne that wholsome doctrine which he delivered.

3. Circumstance: Place.

f Luk. 6. 19.

In this choice of the place, *First*, he sheweth great care and wisdome to maintaine outward order in the dispensation of his Word; whereby he teacheth us, that in all holy ministrations, outward order is to bee kept, and convenient places chosen, where the Word of God may be reverently and profitably both spoken and heard. *Secondly*, herein he sheweth speciall care to dispense his Fathers will when occasion was offered; yea, hee declareth his diligence herein: so as it is true, it was [g] *meat and drinke unto him*, thus by teaching the people to *doe his Fathers will.* And this his practice must be a president and example to all Gods Ministers. They must not preach by constraint, but of a willing minde; yea, they must rejoyce and bee glad when occasion is offered, that they may dispense the will of God unto his people. This *Paul* meant in his straight charge to *Timothy*, that [h] *He should be instant, and teach in season, and out of season*: that is, take all occasions to teach the word; following the example of Christ, who stayed not till he came at Jerusalem, or to some Synagogue, but having good occasion offered, taught the multitude in this Mountaine.

1 Vses.

2

g Joh. 4. 34.

h 2. Tim. 4. 1. 2.

Thirdly, here is noted that *bodily gesture*, which Christ useth in this Sermon; hee taught them, not standing, but sitting; *when he was set*: so when he preached in Nazaret, [i] *he stood up and read his Text, and then sat downe, and preached unto them.* And when his Father and Mother sought him at the feast, [k] *they found him in the Temple sitting among the Doctors and asking them questions*: and being apprehended, he said to the multitude, [l] *I sate daily with you in the Temple teaching.* Now Christ used to preach *sitting*, because it was the manner and custome of that Church so to doe: *The Scribes and Pharisees* (saith [m] *Christ*) *sit in Moses chaire*: where he noteth their gesture in teaching and expounding the Law. Whereby we are taught to bee carefull in observing all seemely, commendable,

3. Circumstance: Gesture.

i Luk. 4. 16. 20.

k Luk. 2. 46.

l Mat. 26. 55.

m Mat. 23. 3.

mendable, and convenient gestures, which are used in that Church whereof we are members. If any shall aske, whether we may not preach sitting, as Christ did? Answer, if it were the, custome of our Church, we might lawfully doe it: for these gestures bee indifferent in themselves: but we doe it not, because our custome is otherwise. And so we may say of preaching with the head covered, which is the manner used by the Ministers of the French Churches; but we use it not, because we have no such custome in our Church.

Fourthly, here are noted the *parties* whom Christ taught, namely his disciples: for though he spake in the audience of the multitude, yet herein he chiefly intended to instruct his Disciples: that is, all those whom he had converted by his former ministery, and among them principally the twelve Apostles, whom hee had newly chosen to become teachers of others. This circumstance must be well observed, for as it helpeth to cleare some points in the doctrine following; so it serveth notably to prove and justifie the Schooles of the Prophets, wherein some teach, and others heare and learne, for this end, to furnish themselves with gifts, that afterward they may become good and able teachers in Gods Church: for what is this but to follow the example of Christ, who in this place delivereth doctrine and instruction to his twelve Apostles, the better to inable them to the faithfull discharge of their holy ministery.

4. Circumstance. Hearers.

Lastly, in this preface is noted *Christs manner of speaking*, in these words: *And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying*: which some doe take to signifie nothing else, but a full and evident kind of speech; as if the holy Ghost had said, *he spake with his mouth*: as we use to say in English, *I heard it with mine eares.* But this phrase hath a further meaning: for as *Paul* willing the Ephesians, [n] *to pray to God for him that a doore of utterance may be given him, that he might* open his mouth boldly to *publish the secrets of the Gospel*, doth there make that *opening of his mouth*, a more speciall kind of speaking, and of a farre more weighty matter than his ordinary communication; and as *Elihu* saying, [o] *I will open my lips, and will answer*, doth thereby import, that his speech should be upon due consideration, and sound knowledge; so the Evangelist saying, *Christ opened his mouth*, doth thereby meane, that upon serious meditation upon sundry points of heavenly doctrine, hee began to speake with liberty and authority; and to deliver unto them deepe matter of weight and great importance: that this is the meaning, may appeare by the conclusion of this Sermon, where it is said, [p] *the people wondered at his doctrine, because he taught as one having authority.*

5. Circumstance. Christs manner of speaking.

n Ephes. 6. 19.

o Iob 32. 20.

p Chap. 7. 29.

6 Vses.

1

Doth Christ here open his mouth, and utter weighty points of doctrine in this Sermon? then it standeth all Churches and people in hand to open their eares, and apply their hearts to heare, learne, receive, beleeve, and obey the same: this is that Prophet foretold by *Moses, who must be heard in all things that he shall speake*: yea, *whosoever will not heare his voice, must be cut off from among Gods people*: and great reason, *for if the word spoken by Angels stood stedfast, and every transgression received a just recompence of reward*; [r] *how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation preached unto us by Christ?* Secondly, hereby all Gods Ministers are taught, by all godly diligence to seeke to furnish themselves for their holy ministery, that they may bring serious and weighty matter unto Gods people, and deliver the same with that convenient boldnesse and authority, which beseemeth Gods word. Thirdly, in Christs addressing of himselfe to speak, all persons must learne to make conscience both of silence and of speech: this we shall doe, if by silence we close up our lips, till wee have just matter to speake of, tending to the glory of God, or the good of our brethren: and being so prepared upon fit occasion, and in due time, we may utter our minde: wee must remember that Christ left himselfe an example, that wee should follow his steps: and also consider, *that of every idle word that we shall speake, we must render account unto God.* If this were knowne and beleeved, there would not be so many sins in words, by cursing, swearing, vaine and idle speaking, as there be.

q Act. 3. 22, 23.

r Heb. 2. 2, 3.

Vse 2.

Vse 3.

Matth. 12. 36.

C Thus much of the Preface. Now we come to the matter of this Sermon, beginning at the third verse of this Chapter, and so continuing to the 28. verse of the 7. Chapter. And it may be divided into 12. heads or places of doctrine: The first whereof, concerneth true *happinesse* or *blessednesse*: from the 2. vers. of this Chapter, to the 13. wherein are propounded sundry rules directing men to attaine thereunto. The scope of them all must be considered, which in generall is this: Our Saviour Christ had now preached two yeares among the people, and thereby had wonne many to become his Disciples; and among the rest, his 12. Apostles: to all whom hee promised happinesse and life everlasting, if they would continue in the faith and obedience of his word. Now though they beleeved in him, yet they still remained in the same state for outward things, and became more subject to outward miseries than before: so as if they judged of happinesse by their present outward estate, they might easily suspect the truth of Christs doctrine, and thinke he had deceived them, because he promised them happinesse, and yet for outward things, their case was farre worse, than before they knew him. This our Saviour Christ considering, doth here goe about to remove this false conceit out of their mindes; and for this purpose delivereth this doctrine unto them, in the first generall head of his Sermon; *that true happinesse before God, is ever joyned, yea, covered*

The matter of Christs Sermon.

1 Part: of happinesse.

many

many times with the croſſe in this world. Wherby he ſtrikes at the root of their carnall conceit, who placed true happineſſe in outward things, and looked for outward peace and proſperity upon the receiving of the Goſpell.

1 Vſe. As this is the ſcope of the doctrine following, ſo it ſtands us in hand to learne the ſame, and to finde experience hereof in our owne hearts, that true comfort and felicity is accompanied with manifold miſeries in this life. Indeed carnall wiſdome deemeth them happy that enjoy outward peace, wealth, and pleaſure, but this conceit muſt be removed, and Chriſts doctrine embraced, who joyneth true happines with the croſſe. Secondly, this ſerveth to teach us patience in affliction; for it is Gods will to temper happineſſe and the croſſe together: now this puts life into an afflicted ſoule, to thinke that Chriſt will have his felicity injoyed and felt in outward miſery. Thus much of this head of doctrine in generall: now wee come to the branches thereof.

v. 3 *Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit: for theirs is the kingdome of heaven.*

1. Rule of happineſſe. Here is Chriſts *firſt Rule* concerning happineſſe; wherein obſerve two points: firſt, the parties bleſſed, *the poore in ſpirit*: ſecondly, wherein this bleſſedneſſe conſiſts, *for theirs is the kingdome of heaven.* Before wee come to theſe parts ſeverally, note in a word, the forme of ſpeech here uſed; they that are led by humane reaſon will rather ſay, *Bleſſed are the rich, for theirs are the kingdomes of the world*: But Chriſt here ſpeaks the flat contrary; ſaying, *bleſſed are the poore, for theirs is the kingdome of heaven*, which is infinitely better than all the kingdomes of the world; whereby we may ſee that the wiſdome of this world is fooliſhneſſe with God, and the ordinaty conceit of man, flat oppoſite to the ſaving doctrine taught by Chriſt.

1. Part. *Bleſſed.* *Blessed are the poore in ſpirit.* The word tranſlated *poore*, doth properly ſignifie a *begger*, one that hath no outward neceſſaries, but by gift from others: but here it is more largely taken, not onely betokening thoſe that want outward riches, (for [f] Saint *Luke* oppoſeth *theſe poore to the rich in this world*) but alſo thoſe that are any way miſerable, wanting inward or outward comfort: and ſuch an one was *Lazarus, that lay begging at Dives gates.* What is meant by *poore in ſpirit*, is plainly expounded Iſa.66.2. where the Lord ſaith, *I will looke to him that is poore, and of a contrite ſpirit, and that trembleth at my words.* Chriſts meaning then is this, *that theſe poore are bleſſed, who by meanes of their diſtreſſe, through want of outward comforts are brought to ſee their ſins, and their miſeries thereby; ſo are finding no goodneſſe in their hearts, they deſpaire in themſelves, and fly wholly to the mercy of God in Chriſt for grace and comfort, as Lazarus did to Dives gates for outward releefe.*

f Luk.6.20.24.

g Luk.16.20,21.

A

Seeing Chriſt doth thus ſet out the perſon that is truly bleſſed, let us ſee whether wee be in the number of theſe poore ones. Indeed wee have many poore among us, ſome that by exceſſe and riot have ſpent their ſubſtance, and others that through idleneſſe increaſe their want; as the wandring beggers, a ſinfull and diſordered people, who joyne themſelves to no Church: but none of theſe can by their poverty make juſt claime to true felicity. The bleſſed poore, are poore in ſpirit; and this poverty we muſt finde in our hearts, if we would know our ſelves to bee truly happy: but after triall, this will be found much wanting; for firſt, if men live outwardly civill, and keepe themſelves from groſſe ſinnes, this thought of pride takes place in their hearts, that they are righteous, and they perſwade themſelves with the [h] *young man* in the Goſpell, that they can keepe Gods commandements. Secondly, let worldly wants befall men, in body, goods, or name, and they are grieved; yea, their ſoules are full of ſorrow: but for ſpirituall wants, as blindneſſe of minde, hardneſſe of heart, unbeleefe, and diſobedience, their hearts are never touched. Now whence comes this, but from that pride of heart, whereby they bleſſe themſelves in their eſtate, and thinke all is well with them in reſpect of their ſoules? ſo that true it is, poverty of ſpirit is hard to bee found. Wee therefore muſt ſearch our ſelves, and labour to feele our ſpirituall wants; and looke how *Lazarus* lay for his body at *Dives* gates; ſo muſt we lie at Gods mercy gate in Chriſt, for our ſoules, abandoning this pride of heart, and acknowledging that there is no goodneſſe in us of our ſelves; for the ſtrait gate of heaven cannot receive a ſwelling heart that is puffed up with pride. And to induce us unto this good dutie, let us conſider the gracious promiſes made to them that be poore in ſpirit; [x] they are called *Gods poore: The thinketh on them*: though *heaven be Gods throne, and the earth his footſtoole, yet will hee* [z] *looke to him that is poore and of a contrite ſpirit*: yea, *the Lord will* [a] *dwell with him that is of a contrite and broken heart*: [b] *Chriſt came to preach the glad tidings of the Goſpel to the poore*: yea, [c] *the Lord filleth the hungry* (that is, the poore and hungry ſoule) *with good things, but the rich he ſends empty away.* Let theſe and many ſuch favors with God, which they enjoy, provoke us to become poore in ſpirit.

B

h Mat.19.20.

x Pſal.72.2.

y Pſal.40.17.

z Iſa.66.2.

a Iſa.57.15.

b Luk.4.18.

c Luk.1.53.

Secondly, are they bleſſed that be *poore in ſpirit*? then here all poore and wretched perſons in the world may learne to make good uſe of their wants and diſtreſſes; they muſt conſider them as the hand of God upon them, and thereby bee led to the view of their ſinnes: and by the conſideration of their ſinnes, bee brought

Matth.5. verſ.3.

Vſe 1. Triall of our poverty.

2. Poore mens duties.

brought to ſee their miſery in themſelves, the true ground of this ſpirituall poverty. Now, when they are once poore in ſpirit, they are in a bleſſed ſtate in the judgement of Chriſt. If a man bleed dangerouſly at the noſe, the beſt way to ſave his life, is to let him bloud elſewhere, and ſo turne the courſe of the bloud another way: even ſo, when a man is oppreſſed with worldly calamities, hee cannot finde any comfort in them, for in themſelves they are Gods curſes; yet if thereby he can be brought to ſee his ſpirituall poverty, then of curſes they become bleſſings unto him: and therefore when we are in any diſtreſſe, wee muſt not onely fix our eies upon the outward croſſe, but by means of that, labour to ſee the poverty of our ſoules; and ſo will the croſſe lead us to happineſſe.

3. Rich mens duty.

Thirdly, they that abound with worldly wealth, muſt hereby learne to become *poore* if they will be bleſſed: *Poore* I ſay, not in goods, but in ſpirit: this indeed is hard to fleſh and bloud, for naturally every rich man bleſſeth himſelfe in his outward eſtate, and perſwades himſelfe that God loves him, becauſe hee gives him wealth: but ſuch conceits muſt he ſtrive againſt, and learne of God *to rejoyce in this, that he is made low*: Jam.1.10.

4. Againſt the vow of poverty. Baltſarm. de Monach. l.1.cap.30.

Fourthly, on this ſaying of Chriſt, that *the poore are bleſſed*, the Popiſh teachers (obſerving the word tranſlated *poore*, to betoken outward poverty) goe about to build their vow of voluntary poverty, whereby men renouncing their wealth and poſſeſſions of this world, doe betake themſelves to ſome Monaſtery, there to live a poore and ſolitary life. But their voluntary poverty will not agree with this text; for Chriſts poore here pronounced bleſſed, are ſuch, as by reaſon of their poverty, are miſerable and wretched, wanting outward comforts, as we ſhewed out of *Luke*, [d] where Chriſt oppoſeth them to the rich, who abound with all worldly delights: but to undergoe the Popiſh vow of voluntary poverty, is no eſtate of miſery or diſtreſſe; for who doe live in greater eaſe, or enjoy more freedome from the croſſes and vexations of this life, than their begging Friers? Againe, if their vowed poverty had any ground in this Text, then Chriſt ſhould pronounce ſuch poore bleſſed, as made themſelves poore; but that he doth not: for then in the next verſe he ſhould pronounce ſuch mourners bleſſed, as voluntarily cauſe themſelves to mourne: for that verſe dependeth on this, as a more full explanation of this firſt rule: But no man will ſay, that they that mourne without a cauſe, are there called bleſſed: and therefore Popiſh vowed poverty hath no ground on this place. And thus much of the perſons.

d Luk.6.20. with 24.

II. Point. Wherein the bleſſednesse of theſe poore conſiſts; namely, in having a right to the kingdome of heaven: *For theirs is the Kingdome of heaven. By kingdome of heaven* (for the better conceiving of this bleſſednesse) wee muſt underſtand a ſtate or condition of man, whereby he is in Gods favor, and hath fellowſhip with God. The truth of this deſcription is evident by the tenour of the new Teſtament. Now this eſtate of man is called a *Kingdome*, becauſe herein God rules as King, and man obeyes as Gods ſubject: for no man can be in Gods favor, nor enjoy his fellowſhip, unleſſe God be his King, ruling in his heart by his word and ſpirit, and he Gods ſubject reſigning himſelfe to be ruled by him: for this happy eſtate conſiſts in Gods gracious ruling of man, and mans holy ſubjection unto God. Indeed few doe ſee any great happineſſe in this eſtate: but the truth is, mans whole felicity ſtands herein: Rom.14.17. *The kingdome of God is not meat and drinke, but righteouſneſſe, peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt.* Here the Apoſtle teacheth us three things: namely, that when Gods ſpirit rules in a mans heart, then firſt, he is juſtified, there *is righteouſneſſe*: ſecondly, he hath peace *with God*, even that peace of conſcience which paſſeth all underſtanding: thirdly, the joy of the holy Ghoſt, which is an unſpeakable comfort, paſſing all worldly joy whatſoever. And theſe three doe notably ſet out the ſtate of an happy man: which will yet more plainely appeare by their contraries in *Judas*, who being a wretched ſinner, unrighteouſly betrayed his maſter, and thereupon fell into the miſerie of a guilty accuſing conſcience, which was the cauſe of his deſperate death, and alſo that his body burſt aſunder, and his bowels guſhed out: Now if an evill conſcience be ſo fearefull, then how bleſſed an eſtate is the peace and joy of a good conſcience? which a man then hath, when God by his word and ſpirit ruleth in his heart. Againe, this eſtate is called the *kingdome of heaven*, becauſe that man in whom Chriſt ruleth by his word and ſpirit, is already himſelfe in heaven, though in body hee be yet on earth: for heaven is like a citie with two gates, thorow both which a man muſt paſſe, before he obtaine the full joyes thereof: now ſo ſoone as God by his word and ſpirit rules in any mans heart, hee is already entred the ſtate of grace, which is the firſt gate; the other remaines to bee paſſed thorow at the time of death, which is the gate of glory, and then hee is in full poſſeſſion.

Kingdome of heaven.

Vſe 1. The error of the world touching happineſſe.

Doth true happineſſe conſiſt in this eſtate, where Chriſt ruleth and man obeyes? then here behold the error of all Philoſophers and wiſe men of this world touching happineſſe: for ſome have placed it in pleaſure, ſome in wealth, and others in civill vertues, and ſome in all theſe. But the truth is, it ſtands in none of theſe. A naturall man may have all theſe, and yet be condemned: for the civill vertues of the heathen, were in them but glorious ſinnes. Our Saviour Chriſt hath here revealed more unto us, than all the wiſe men of the world did ever know: and hereby we have juſt occation to magnifie

magnifie the bookes of Scripture, farre above all humane writings, because they doe fully set out unto us the nature and estate of true felicity, which no humane worke could ever doe: we must therefore account of them, not as the word of man, but of the everliving God: yea, this must persuade us to maintaine the bookes of Scripture against all devillish Atheists, that deny the same to be the word of God.

2 Pray for Gods kingdome.

Secondly, hereby wee are taught, from the bottome of our hearts, to make that petition for our selves, which Christ teacheth in his holy prayer; namely, *that he would let his kingdome come*: that is, not suffer sinne, Satan, or the world to reigne in us, but by his word and spirit to rule in our hearts, giving us grace to be guided thereby in all our wayes. We affect nothing more than happinesse, and therefore wee must oftentimes most seriously make this request to God, preferring this estate with God, before all pleasures and happines in this world, and use all good meanes to feele in our hearts the power of Christs kingdome.

3 Feare Gods word.

Thirdly, this should move us to heare Gods word with all feare and reverence; for by this meanes, the kingdome of Christ is erected in us; when the word of Christ takes place in our hearts by faith, and brings forth in our lives the fruits of righteousnesse, and true repentance, then may we truly say, the kingdome of heaven is in us.

4 Consolation to the poore.

Lastly, Christ ascribing this happy title of his heavenly kingdome to them that be poore, and of a contrite heart, doth herein minister a soveraigne remedie against all temptations, from outward povertie and distresse: Doubtlesse poverty is a grievous crosse, not onely in regard of the want of bodily comforts; but especially because of that contempt and reproach, which in this world doth hang upon it: whereupon many doe esteeme their poverty, as a signe of Gods wrath against them, and thereby take occasion to despaire, thinking the kingdome of darknesse belongeth unto them. But here consider you poore, this sentence of Christ, where he plainly teacheth, that if a man in outward distresse, can be brought to feele his spirituall poverty, and the wretchednesse of his soule, by reason of his sinnes; then he is so farre from having just cause to despaire of Gods favour, by reason of his poverty, that on the contrary, he may gather to his soule a most comfortable assurance, from the mouth of him that cannot lie, that the kingdome of heaven belongs unto him.

v. 4 *Blessed are they that mourne: for they shall be comforted.*

Rule.

Here is Christs *second rule* touching blessednesse: wherein consider two points: first, the parties who are blessed, *they that mourne*: secondly, wherein their blessednesse consists, namely, *in receiving comfort*. For the first: by *mourners*, wee must not understand every one that is any way grieved, but such as have just and weighty causes of grieve, and doe therefore mourne: for the words import an exceeding measure of grieve, such as is expressed by crying and weeping, as is plaine by Saint *Luke*, who thus relateth Christs saying; *Blessed are yee that now weepe*. And yet every one is not blessed that mourneth under grievous distresse; for *Cain*, *Saul*, *Achitophel*, and *Judas* were all deeperly affected in soule with their most wofull estates, though farre from thus blessednesse. This *rule* then, must thus be understood; *that they are blessed who with their mourning for weighty causes of grieve, doe withall mourne for their sins*: for so was the former Rule to be understood, of those that with the sense of their outward distresse, had adjoyned an inward feeling of their spiritual wants: and this verse is but a more full explication thereof, as if he should have said, they are blessed that are poore in spirit: Yea, put case a man be distressed for most weighty causes of grieve, so as he howle and cry under the burthen of them: yet if withall, he can unfainedly mourne and waile in heart for his sinnes, notwithstanding all his poverty and distresse, he is truly blessed.

Matth. 5. vers. 4.

A

B

C

D

Vses. Consolations. 1

This blessed sentence upon them that mourne, serves sundry wayes for a soveraigne salve to the conscience of a Christian. As first; put the case a man were distressed with grievous calamities, and withall were overtaken with some heinous sinne, whereupon not onely his body is afflicted, but his conscience also wounded, and so hee is cast into the gulfe of desperation: yea, say further, that by reason of the terror of his conscience, his flesh were withered, and his marrow consumed in his bones; were not this a cause of exceeding mourning? yet loe, our most blessed Physician Christ Jesus, hath made a plaster for his sore: for if this man of distresses, can withall truly mourne for offending God through his transgressions, he is undoubtedly blessed; for Christ hath said it, whose word shall never faile though heaven and earth come to nothing. A blessed text, which being well applied, will not onely support the heart in great distresse, but recover the conscience from under deepe despaire. Secondly, put case a man were grievously sicke, and that he felt the very pangs of death without all ease to seaze upon him, so as both speech and sight, with all outward comforts began to faile him; this state were lamentable: yet if in his soule hee can truly mourne for his offences, even in this extremity, he is blessed. Thirdly, put case a man were taken of his enemies, and his wife and children slaine before his face, having their braines dashed out upon the stones, afterward himselfe put to a most wofull racke and torment: this were an estate more wofull than death: yet herein

2

3

Matthew 7.15.

Luke 6.21. Matthew 7.15.

Matth. 5. ver. 4, 5.

herein a man must not judge himselfe as a castaway, but with mourning for his miserie, he must labour to be sorrowfull for his sinnes, and then he need not feare what flesh can doe unto him, for he is blessed. Christs Word must stand, let thy distresse be what it will, if under it thou mourne for thy sinnes, blessed art thou. Wee cannot conceive while we enjoy peace, of the worth of this rule in the evill day: neither doe we know how neere the time is, wherein wee shall have need thereof; and therefore we must now learne this never to be forgotten, to season all other mourning with godly sorrow for our sinnes.

II. Point. Wherein this blessednesse consists; namely, *in that their mourning shall have an end, and be turned into true comfort*. That this is true happinesse will appeare by the contrarie: for the woe and sorrow that is here begunne, and continued in the world to come, is the punishment of the damned spirits, and the portion of the Reprobate, which is endlesse miserye: and therefore unto them that mourne, it is true happinesse, that they shall receive comfort. This promise of *Comfort* is accomplished foure waies: *First*, when God tempers and delayes the sorrowes and afflictions of them that mourne, according to the measure of their strength: 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God is faithfull, and will not suffer you to bee tempted above that you are able to beare*. This was promised to *David* and his seed, that *if they did sinne, he would correct them with the rod of men: but not take his mercie quite from them*. 2 Sam. 7. 14. *Secondly*, when God removes the griefe with the causes thereof: thus he comforted *Manasses*, who for his abominable Idolatries and witchcrafts was *carried captive into Babylon, and there laid in prison: fettered in chaines of iron*: yet when he did *mourne under that affliction*, and withall *humbled himselfe unto God for his sinnes, the Lord comforted him, by bringing him out of that captivity and prison, to Ierusalem into his own kingdome. Thirdly*, when God gives inward comfort to the heart and conscience, by his Word and Spirit. In this case *Paul* said, *We rejoyce in afflictions, knowing that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given us*: yea, when he was exceedingly afflicted above his strength, so as he received the *sentence of death in himselfe*, having no hope of life, yet even then he professeth, that *as the sufferings of Christ abounded toward him, so his consolations through Christ abounded in him. Fourthly*, when God by death puts an end to all their miseries, and brings their soules to eternall life. Thus was *Lazarus* comforted, as *Abraham* saith unto *Dives*, Luk. 16. 25. and thus doth Christ comfort the theefe upon the crosse (who with his bodily torment for his lewd life, was undoubtedly touched in conscience for his sins, and therefore desires Christ to remember him, when he came into his kingdom) by telling him, that *that day he should be with him in Paradise*.

A

B

Foure wayes of comfort. 1

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2 Chr. 33. 13.

3

Rom. 5. 3.

2 Cor. 1. 8. with v. 4. 5.

4

Luke 23. 43.

Here then we have a notable remedy against the immoderate feare of death, whether naturall or violent, and of any other judgement of God: for when death it selfe, or any other miserie whatsoever shall befall us, if wee can therewith bewaile our transgressions, we need not feare, still holding fast his promise by faith in our hearts, *that we shall be comforted*. Secondly, this promise well observed, may teach us to avoid the peril of this false conceit; *That true faith doth alwayes minister present comfort*. Many doe herewith perplex themselves, measuring their estate towards God, by that which they feele in themselves; so as if in time of trouble they finde not present comfort, they judge themselves void of faith, and cast out of Gods favour: but herein they greatly wrong themselves: for though the apprehension of comfort, from God in distresse, be a fruit and worke of faith, yet a man may have true faith, that wants this sense and feeling of present comfort. Doubtlesse none are blessed that want faith, yet many are blessed that want feeling: for here it is said, *They that mourne for sin are now blessed*: and yet it is not said, they are now comforted, but they *shall be comforted*; meaning afterward, in Gods good time.

Vse. 1.

2

v. 5 *Blessed are the meeke: for they shall inherit the earth.*

C

This is the *third Rule* of Christ touching happinesse; which as the former, containeth two parts: first, the parties blessed: secondly, wherein this blessednesse consists. For the first: The parties blessed be the *meeke*. That we may know aright who bee *meeke*, I will somewhat lay open the vertue of meeknesse, and briefly handle these foure points: first, what *Meeknesse* is: secondly, what be the *fruits thereof*: thirdly, wherein it must bee *shewed*: fourthly the *cause* and ground thereof.

3 Rule.

Foure points touching meeknesse.

D

I. Point. Meeknesse is a gift of Gods Spirit, whereby a man doth moderate his affection of anger, and bridle in himselfe impatience, hatred, and desire of revenge.

What meeknesse is.

II. Point. The fruits of meeknesse are principally two: first, it makes a man with a quiet and patient heart, to beare Gods judgements: which is a worthy grace of God, and the greatest fruit of meeknesse: Levit. 10. 3. when *Aarons* two sonnes *Nadab* and *Abihu* were burned with fire from heaven, which was a grievous judgement, he went to *Moses* to know the cause thereof, who told him, that God would be glorified in all that came neere him; which when *Aaron* heard, *he held his peace*, and was not moved with grudging or impatience. So *David* being in great distresse through the hand of God upon him,

The fruit of it. 1

B

doth

doth notably shew forth this grace, saying, [a] *I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth, because Lord, thou diddest it.* Secondly, meeknesse causeth one with a quiet minde to beare the injuries men doe unto him: yea, to forgive and forget them; and to require good for evill, referring all revenge to God that judgeth righteously. When [b] *David's* enemies *laid snares for his life, uttered sorrowes, and imagined deceit against him continually*; yet by this vertue he suffered all patiently, *being as a deafe man that heareth not, and as the dumbe which openeth not his mouth*: so farre was he from private revenge. And our Saviour Christ sets forth himselfe a patterne of this vertue; saying, [c] *Learne of me, that I am meeke and lowly in heart*: herein he left himselfe an example that we should follow his steppes, [d] *Who when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he was buffeted, he threatned not, but referred all to the judgement of him that judgeth righteously*: yea, [e] *he prayed for them that crucified him.* So did *Stephen*, Act. 7. 60. *Lord, lay not this sinne to their charge*: so *Zacharias*, the sonne of *Iehoiada*, being stoned, said only this; *The Lord will see and require it at your hands*, 2 Chron. 24. 22.

a Psal. 39. 2. 9.

b Psal. 38. 12. 13. 14.

c Mat. 11. 29.

d 1 Pet. 2. 23.

e Luke. 23. 34.

III. Point. Wherein must this meekenesse be showed? Ans. Not in the matters of God, when his glory is impeached: for therein we must have zeale as hot as fire: but in the wrongs and injuries that concerne our selves. *Moses* was the *meekest man* upon the earth in his time, Numb. 12. verse 3. and yet when the Israelites had made a golden calfe, in zeale to Gods glory, [f] *He brake the two tables of stone*; and *put to the sword that same day, three thousand men*, of them that had so dishonoured God. *David* also that held his tongue at his owne wrongs, *did consume away with zeale against his enemies that forgat Gods word*, Psal. 119. 139. And our Saviour Christ, who as *a lambe before the shearer, opened not his mouth* for the wrongs done unto himselfe; did yet in resene of his Fathers glory, *make a whip of cords, and drive the buyers out of the Temple, who made his Fathers house a denne of theeves*: Matth. 21. 12.

Wherein meekenesse must be showed.

f Exod. 32. 19. 27.

IV. Point. The *cause* and *ground of this meekenesse* is *affliction and poverty of spirit*, as the order of these rules declareth; where it is placed after *poverty of spirit*, and *mourning*: and therefore Psal. 37. 11. whence these words are borrowed, the meeke person is called by a name that signifieth *one afflicted*; to teach us that he that is meeke indeed, is one who by affliction, and distresse, hath bin brought to mourne for his offences: for hardly can he be meeke and patient in spirit, that hath not beene acquainted with the crosse. Lam. 3. 27, 28, 29. The Church commendeth this *bearing of the crosse in youth*, because it maketh a man to *sit quietly alone, to put his mouth into the dust, and to give his cheeke unto the nippers.*

Grounds of meekenesse.

The 4. ground.

Doth blessednesse belong to meeke persons? hereby then we are admonished to labour for the moderation of all our affections, especially of anger, hatred, and revenge; and to beware of all hinderances to this blessed vertue, as choller, hastinesse, grudging, impatience under wrongs, with all raylling, reviling, chiding and brawling, and all such threatning speeches, which come too oft in practice, *that we may forgive, but we will never forget*: yea, in Action we must avoid all quarreling, fighting, contending, and going to law on everie light occasion: for true meeknesse admits none of all these to take place with Gods children. And to induce us hereunto, consider first Christs precept and example, bidding us [g] *Learne of him, for hee is meeke and lowly.* Again, consider Gods owne dealing with us, wee daily wrong him by our offences, and yet he beares with us; shall we then be unlike our heavenly Father, that wee will straight revenge the wrongs that others doe unto us? See Colossi. 3. 12, 13. *As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on the bowels of mercie, gentlenesse, lowlinesse of minde, meeknesse, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrell against another; even as God for Christs sake forgave you, so doe yee.* Lastly, the fruition and practice of this grace hath the promise of blessednesse belonging to it; and therefore as we would be happie, so we must get the spirit of meeknesse into our hearts, and expresse the vertue and power thereof in our lives.

Motives to meeknesse. 1

g Mat. 11. 29. 2

Object. I. Here some will say, If I put up all injuries, I shall be counted a dastard and a foole. *Ans.* In this case learne of *Paul*, to *passe little for mans judgement*: but be carefull to get and practise this grace of meeknesse, and then Christ will pronounce thee blessed, which ought more to prevaile with thee, than all mens estimation in the world; and so it will, unlesse thou *love the praise of men, more than the praise of God*, Ioh. 12. 48.

3

Object. II. Againe, it will be said, The more I use to put up wrongs, the more shall I have still done unto me. *Ans.* That is onely so with wicked men; for who [h] *else will wrong thee, if thou follow that which is good?* Yet say they doe, *thy patient suffering, is praise-worthy with God*: and, [k] *he will take the matter into his hand*: yea, Christ Iesus, who judgeth not by the sight of the eye, [l] *he will rebuke aright for all the meeke of the earth.*

h 1 Pet. 3. 13.

i 1 Pet. 2. 19.

k Psal. 10. 4.

l Isa. 11. 4.

Object. III. But yet thou sayest, this is the way to lose all that a man hath, and to bee thrust out of house and harbour. *Ans.* Nothing lesse: for Christ here saith, *the meeke shall inherit the earth*; doubt not but Christ will make good his word: and therefore if thou respect these outward things, labour to get and exercise the spirit of meeknesse.

II. Point. Wherein doth this blessednesse of the meeke consist? namely, in *their inheriting of the earth.* And this is a great happinesse, for a man to

to be Lord of the whole earth. But how can this be true? sith many of Gods dearest servants have beene *strangers on this earth*, thrust out of house and land, and constrained to wander in mountaines, and desarts, afflicted and miserable, yea, destitute of convenient food and raiment, Hebr. 11. 37, 38. *Answ.* The meeke are here called Inheritours of the earth, not for that they alwayes have the possession thereof; but first, because God gives a meet and convenient portion of the earth, either to them, or to their posteritie; thus he deale with *Abraham, Isaac*, and *Iacob*, they had sufficient for themselves, and a promise of great possessions, which their posteritie did enjoy. Secondly, if it fall out, that meeke persons died in want, or banishment; yet God gives them contentation, which is fully answerable of the inheritance of the earth; so *Paul* saith to himselfe, and other Apostles, [m] *They were as men having nothing, and yet possessed all things*: meaning through contentation, with the peace of a good conscience. Thirdly the meeke have this inheritance in regard of right, being the members of Christ, who is Lord of all. Hence *Paul* saith to the beleeving Corinthians, [n] *All things are yours, whether it be Paul, or Cephas, or the world, things present, or things to come, all are yours, and yee Christs.* Fourthly, the meeke are made *Kings* by Christ, and after the last judgement, they shall *rule and reigne with him for evermore*, Rev. 5. 10. And in these two last respects, the meeke are more properly said to be the Inheritours of the earth. *Object.* Yet here it will be said againe, that wicked and carnall men are oftentimes the greatest Lords of the earth; as *Nimrod* in his time, and the Turke at this day. *Answ.* The right unto the earth is twofold; Civill and Spirituall: *Civill right* is that, which stands good before men, by their lawes and customes; and in regard thereof, men are called Lords of such lands, as they have right unto in the Courts of men: and so the Turke at this day, is a mighty Lord of a great part of the whole world. *Spirituall right* is that, which is warrantable and approved with God himselfe, and such right and title had *Adam* to all the world, before his fall, which he lost by his sinne, both from himselfe, and all his posteritie: but yet in Christ, the same is recovered to all the elect. And of this right Christ here speaketh, when he calleth the meeke Inheritours of the earth: in regard whereof, the Turke, and all unbelievers and ungodly persons are usurpers of those things, which otherwise civilly they doe lawfully possesse.

Inheritance of the meeke.

1

m 2 Cor. 6. 10.

3

n 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22.

4

A twofold right to earthly things.

1 Civill.

2 Spirituall.

Vses.

1 The Commonwealth seeking wealth.

Here then is an excellent privilege of all the true members of Christ, that in him they be Lords of the earth: whereby first, we may see how farre most men doe over-shoot themselves in seeking earthly possessions; for the manner is, without all regard of Christ, to hunt after the world: but this is a prepostorous course, these men set the Cart before the horses; for seeing all our right to the earth was lost by *Adam*, and is onely recovered by Christ, doubtlesse till we have part in Christ, we cannot with the comfort of a good conscience, either purchase, or possesse any inheritance upon earth. In regard of certainetie, men desire to hold their lands *in capite*, that is, in the Prince, as being the best tenure; but if wee would have a sure title, and hold aright *in capite*, we must labour to become true members of Christ, and hold our right in him, for he is the [o] *Prince of the Kings of the earth*, and Lord of all the world: and till wee be in Christ, we shall never have an holy and sanctified right to any worldly possessions.

o Revel. 1. 5.

Secondly, this serves for a bridle against all immoderate care for the world; for if wee bee members of Christ, and meeke persons, then the inheritance of the earth is ours: what need have we then to carke and care so much for worldly pelfe, as most men doe, who never think they have enough?

2

Thirdly, this serves for a just rebuke of all those that seeke to enrich themselves by cruelitie, lying, fraud, and oppression: for if thou bee in Christ, thou hast right to the whole world: what need then hast thou to use unlawfull meanes to get that which is thine owne? But sure it is, thou hast no part in Christ, while thou givest thy selfe to these courses; for if thou hadst, thou wouldest be content with wharsoever God sends in the use of lawfull meanes, Philip. 4. 11.

3

Lastly, hence all Gods children may learne to comfort their hearts against the feare of any punishment for the name of Christ; for keepe Christ sure, and whithersoever thou art sent, thou art upon thine owne ground: for the whole earth is thine, and in Christ one day thou shalt possesse it, when all Tyrants shall be banished into hell. Now being on thine owne ground, what need hast thou to feare?

4

v. 6. *Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, for they shall bee filled.*

Here is the *fourth Rule* touching blessednesse, which is also mentioned by Saint *Luke*, yet something different from that of *Matthew*: for according to *Luke*, Christ directeth his speech to his disciples, and speakes of bodily hunger, saying, *Blessed are yee that hunger now, for ye shall be satisfied*: as if he should say, You my Disciples doe now suffer hunger and thirst, but this shall not prejudice your happie estate, for hereafter you shall be satisfied. Now *Matthew* goeth a degree further, and layeth downe a cause and Reason, why they being hungrie are blessed; not simply, for that they were pinched with bodily hunger, but because withall,

4 Rule.

Luke. 6. 21.

wo mall, they did further ſpiritually in their ſoules hunger after righteouſneſſe. Thus then the two Evangeliſts doe agree; S. *Luke* laies downe this Rule generally, but *Matthew* propounds therein the reaſon of this bleſſednelle.

This Rule, as the former, containes two parts: firſt, who are bleſſed: ſecondly, wherein this bleſſednelle doth conſiſt. For the firſt, the parties bleſſed are ſuch, *as hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe*. The expoſition of theſe words is diverſe; Some give this ſenſe: Bleſſed are thoſe that are grieved with the iniquities that abound in the world, and withall doe in heart and ſoule long for the amendment and reformation thereof. Others expound the words thus: Bleſſed are thoſe that by wrongs and injuries are deprived of their right in this world, and ſo are conſtrained to hunger and thirſt after that which is their owne, waiting by patience to obtaine the ſame. But there is a third expoſition which doth more fully open unto us the meaning of Chriſt; to wit, by *righteouſneſſe* we may well underſtand in the firſt place, the *righteouſneſſe of faith*, whereby a ſinner is juſtified through grace in Chriſt, and ſo ſtands righteous before God, having the pardon of all his ſinnes: beſides this, we may here alſo underſtand *inward righteouſneſſe*, whereby a man is ſanctified and made holy, having Gods image renued in him by the ſpirit of grace, which was loſt by the fall of our firſt parents. And that this imputed and renued righteouſneſſe may here be underſtood, will appeare by theſe reaſons: Firſt, in ſuch places of Scripture where like ſentences are repeated, wee muſt underſtand not civill righteouſneſſe, but juſtification, ſanctification, regeneration: Iſ. 55. 1. *Hee everythou that thirſteth, come to the waters, and hee without ſilver*: and Ioh. 7. 37. *If any man thirſt, let him come unto mee and drinke*: and Revel. 21. 6. *I will give to him that is a thirſt, to drinke of the waters of life freely*: all which places are one in ſubſtance: for by *waters* wee muſt underſtand *righteouſneſſe*, which is that ſpirituall grace of God, the fountaine of all bleſſings, whereby ſinners are juſtified and ſanctified. Secondly, that which is moſt of all to be deſired, muſt needs be the moſt excellent righteouſneſſe: but this righteouſneſſe here mentioned is moſt to be deſired; for Chriſt ſaith, men ſhall *hunger and thirſt after it*, there by expreſſing a moſt earneſt and vehement deſire: and therefore by *righteouſneſſe*, we muſt underſtand Gods grace and mercie in Chriſt, abſolving a ſinner from the guilt and puniſhment of his ſinnes, with ſanctification the fruit thereof, whereby he is purged from corruption. Secondly, by *hungering* and *thirſting*, we muſt underſtand two things: firſt, a ſorrow and griefe of heart in regard of a mans owne ſinnes, and unrighteouſneſſe: ſecondly, an earneſt and conſtant deſire of the righteouſneſſe of God, that is, of juſtification and ſanctification in Chriſt. Anſwerable

Spiritual hunger and thirſt.

A to theſe two things which are in bodily hunger and thirſt, to wit, firſt a paine in the bottome of the ſtomacke for want of meat and drinke; ſecondly, an earneſt deſire and appetite after meat and drinke, to be ſatisfied therewith. And bleſſed is he that is ſo grieved for his owne unrighteouſneſſe, and withall hath an earneſt deſire after reconciliation with God in Chriſt, and after true regeneration and ſanctification by the holy Ghoſt: for this is true ſpirituall hunger and thirſt, whereto belongs this gracious promiſe, that in due time he ſhall be ſatisfied and filled with plenie of Gods mercie and grace, wherein this happineſſe doth conſiſt, which is the ſecond branch of this Rule. This I take to be the true and proper meaning of theſe words, whereupon the two former expoſitions depend; for he that is thus ſpirituall an hungred, is oft deprived of his owne right among men, and ſo is faid to hunger and thirſt after that which is his owne in this world. Againe ſuch a man doth unfainedly grieve at the iniquities that be in the world, and withall, his heart doth moſt earneſtly deſire reformation thereof, both in himſelf and others.

B

Three Conſiderations, which want offaith.

First, this ſentence muſt be remembred, as a ſtorehouſe of true comfort in all grievous temptations, but eſpecially againſt theſe three; the *want of faith*, the *ſmalneſſe of ſanctification*, and *deſpaire*. For the firſt, many in Gods Church have a true care to pleaſe God in all things, and to live in no ſinne againſt their conſcience; and yet they finde in themſelves much diſtruſt and deſpaire of Gods mercie, they feele more doubting than faith: whereupon they are brought to doubts of their election, and ſtate of grace before God. Now how may ſuch bee relieved, and be well perſwaded of their good eſtate? *Anſwer*. The way is laid downe by our Saviour Chriſt in this Rule; *bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe*. For here he teacheth, that thoſe are bleſſed, who are diſpleaſed with their owne doubting and unbeleefe, if they have a true earneſt deſire to be purged from this diſtruſt, and to beleeve in God through Chriſt. Indeed this deſire of faith, and to beleeve is not true faith in nature, but in Gods acceptance: for God reſpects them for this true deſire, as if they had faith. And they are bleſſed, becauſe they ſhall have plenie of faith, and aſſurance of grace and favour with God in Chriſt: for it is mercie and grace with God, to hunger after grace and mercy, when the heart feeles the want thereof: But yet ſuch perſons muſt be admoniſhed, that they ſhew the truth of this deſire, by a conſtant endeavouring in the meanes which God hath ſanctified for the obtaining of a true and lively faith in Chriſt, wherewith they may be ſatisfied.

C

D

Aſſurance of faith.

The ſecond temptation is, from the *ſmalneſſe of ſanctification*. Many there be that endeavour to pleaſe God, making conſcience of all ſinne, and yet they finde in themſelves an exceeding

exceeding meaſure of rebellious corruption, much ignorance in their minds, perverſeneſſe in their wills, and frowardneſſe in their affections; yea, a continuall proneneſſe unto all manner of ſinne: and on the contrary, they can perceive but ſmall fruits of ſanctification; the old man they feele ruſhing in them like a mightie Giant, but the new man ſo weake and feeble, that they can hardly diſcerne any ſpirituall life: and hereupon they are ſore troubled with temptations, yea, oftentimes driven to doubt, whether they have any true grace at all: This cannot but be an heavy caſe, and yet here is true comfort for them: for Chriſt calleth them bleſſed (not that are filled with righteouſneſſe, but) who hunger and thirſt after it; that is, who feeling the want of righteouſneſſe in themſelves, doe earneſtly deſire it in their ſoules. Theſe perſons therefore, that feele in themſelves a ſea of corruption, and ſcarce a drop of ſanctification, muſt truly examine their owne hearts, how they ſtand affected to theſe things; for if they bee truly grieved for their corruption and rebellion, and withall doe earneſtly deſire grace and ſanctification, uſing the meanes conſtantly, whereby they may beefreed from the one, and endued with the other; then they have wherewith they may comfort their hearts, for Chriſt calls them bleſſed: and ſo they are, for in due time they ſhall be ſatisfied: and in the meane time, their will and deſire is accepted of God in Chriſt for the deed itſelfe.

A

Comfort againſt deſpaire.

The third temptation is, to *deſpaire*; when a man after the breach of conſcience by ſome grievous ſinne, is plunged into this gulfe, that he thinkes verily hell is prepared for him, and he muſt needs be damned: what remedie now in ſuch a caſe? *Anſw*. Some thinke the onely way is to propound unto him the grounds of univerſall grace; as that, becauſe hee is a man, Chriſt died for him, for Chriſt died for all: but this is a ſlender comfort, for the deſpairing conſcience will thus reply; God indeed hath done his part, but I refuſed Gods grace when it was offered. Therefore another way of comfort muſt bee ſought; which is, by proving unto him out of Gods Word, that he is within the covenant, and that the promiſes of grace and life doe belong unto him: for the effecting whereof, one main ground is here propounded; to wit, that though a man want all righteouſneſſe, yet if he truly hunger after it, hee is bleſſed: and the right applying of this ground, is this; ſearch muſt be made, whether the party thus deſpairing, hath in him any ſparke of true grace, or no; and this will be knowne by theſe two demands: firſt, whether hee diſlike his ſinnes, becauſe they are ſinnes? ſecondly, whether hee truly deſire to bee reconciled unto God, to repent and beleeve in Chriſt? Now if his conſcience tell him, that theſe things bee in him indeed, then hee is brought within the compaſſe of this bleſſednelle here pronounced

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by Chriſt, and hath title to this promiſe, that he ſhall bee ſatisfied: for he that is grieved for his ſinne, becauſe thereby hee hath offended God, and withall hath an earneſt deſire of mercie and grace, to repent and beleeve, is truly bleſſed. And therefore it may be ſaid unto him, ſeeing thou findeſt in thy heart this griefe for ſinne, and deſire of grace, thou art bleſſed, and ſhalt be ſatisfied. Thus may the diſtreſſed ſoule receive comfort: but as for them that live in ſinne, here is no comfort, for they have no true diſlike of ſinne, no purpoſe or deſire to repent thereof.

The miſery of the poll.

Secondly, as this rule of Chriſt miniſtreth comfort to ſome, ſo it declareth the miſerable eſtate of others; to wit, of all thoſe that want this ſpirituall hunger after righteouſneſſe, for they have no title to the promiſe of heavenly ſatisfaction by Gods mercie in Chriſt. And yet generally this is the ſtate of mea everie where: for after riches, pleaſures, honours, and preferments, men hunger and thirſt, as the drought in ſummer doth after raine; but rare it is to finde a man that ſavoureth the things of God, and thirſteth after his righteouſneſſe, and yet ſuch only are bleſſed.

B

How to know who are happy.

Thirdly, this rule of Chriſt ſerves for ſure direction, whereby wee may know our eſtate before God, in regard of true happineſſe: if we *hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe, wee are ſurely bleſſed*: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it. Now this ſpirituall hunger is known by two things: firſt, by an unfained heartie ſorrow and griefe for ſinne paſt; where this is wanting, true ſpirituall hunger and thirſt is not: ſecondly, by an earneſt deſire of Gods mercie in Chriſt, for the pardon of ſinne, and for ſanctification, teſtified by a conſtant endeavour in the uſe of meanes to come thereby: hee that hath theſe things in him, may aſſure himſelfe that he is bleſſed, for theſe bee the motions of Gods Spirit, and the true pledges of his grace. Hereby then wee muſt trie our eſtate, if theſe things be in us, we have wherein wee may reioyce; but if our hearts be dead, and hard, ſo as we have no touch for our ſinnes, no hungering after the bloud of Chriſt, nor deſire of ſanctification, then are wee void of grace, and ſo moſt miſerable: for the ſmalleſt meaſure of true grace that can bee, is to hunger after grace in the want thereof.

C

Labour for ſpirituall hunger.

Lastly, this rule of bleſſednelle muſt admoniſh us as we tender our ſalvation, ſo to labour for this ſpirituall hunger in our ſoules, after reconciliation with God in Chriſt for all our ſinnes paſt, and for the ſanctification of our hearts and lives by his word and ſpirit: we may heare, reade, and talke of Gods Word, and yet all to no end, unleſſe wee bee in heavineſſe for our owne unrighteouſneſſe, and from our hearts do ſend forth ſighs and groanes after mercie and grace in Chriſt. For what availeth it to have wit and learning, honour, and riches, if the ſoule be void of mercie and grace in Chriſt? which

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doubtlette it is, while this ſpirituall hunger is wanting in the heart. And to move us to labour for this hunger, the reaſon annexed is very effectuall, namely, the Lords promiſe that they ſhall be filled, which alſo ſhewes wherein this bleſſednesse doth conſiſt. Now they that thus hunger are filled, partly in this life, by receiving the teſtimonie of the Spirit, touching reconciliation with God in Chriſt, and ſome fruits of ſanctification, whereby the old man is mortified, and the new man renued in them; but principally at the end of this life, when they ſhall be fully juſtified and ſanctified, and have Gods Image perfectly renued in them.

v. 7. *Bleſſed are the mercifull: for they ſhall obtaine mercie.*

This verſe containeth the *fifth rule* or precept of our Saviour Chriſt touching true happineſſe, in which obſerve two points: firſt, who be bleſſed: ſecondly, wherein this bleſſedneſſe conſiſts. For the firſt: the parties bleſſed be *the merciſull*. And that wee may the better know them, I will ſpeake ſomething of this vertue: firſt, ſhewing what mercy is: then, what bee the chiefe duties thereof.

Mercie deſcribed.

Firſt, *Mercy is an holy compaſſion of heart, whereby a man is moved to helpe an other in his miſerie.* Firſt, I call it a compaſſion of heart, becauſe it makes one man to put on the perſon of another, and to be grieved for the miſeries of an other, as if they were his owne: and therefore it is called [a] *the bowels of compaſſion*, becauſe when a mans heart is touched therewith, his very liver and intrails doe ſtirre in his body, and are *rouled within him* as the [b] Prophet ſpeaketh: and he is affected, as though the bowels of him that is in miſery were in his bodie. Secondly, I call it an *(Holy)* compaſſion, to diſtinguiſh it from fooliſh pity, whereby a man doth unlawfully tender him that is in deſerved miſerie: ſuch was [c] *Ahabs* mercy to *Benhadad*, and [d] *Sauls* in ſparing *Agag*, whereas the expreſſe commandement of God was to the contrary: but ſuch mercy and compaſſion as God approveth, is a fruit of his ſpirit, and a vertue commended and commanded in the Word of God. Thirdly, this vertue of mercy ſtirreth and moveth the heart to helpe an other that is in miſerie: for helpe in miſerie is a notable fruit of true compaſſion, neither can theſe be ſevered: for in the compaſſion of the heart, and in the act of releeſe, ſtands true mercy: and therefore [e] *John* ſaith, *He that ſeeth his brother in need, and ſhutteth up his compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* whereby alſo wee may ſee, that no worke of mercie is ſhewed to any man in miſery, but that which commeth from compaſſion, and thus wee ſee what mercy is.

[a] Col. 3. 12.

[b] Hoſ. 11. 8.

[c] 1 King. 20. 42.

[d] 1 Sam. 15. 9.

[e] 1 John 3. 17.

Diſtinctions of mercy.

Secondly, the duties of mercy are anſwerable to mans miſery: Now mans miſery is either in his ſoule or in his bodie. The greateſt miſeries of man are in his ſoule; as ignorance, impenitencie, and trouble of conſcience: mans bodily miſeries are ſickneſſe, thirſt, nakedneſſe, &c. and to theſe the works of mercie are anſwerable. Some therefore concerne the ſoule, and ſome the bodie. Mercy towards the ſoule is, when a man is carefull for the ſalvation of an other, uſing meanes to bring a man from ſpirituall darkneſſe unto light, from the power of Satan unto God, from the ſtate of ſinne and the danger of hell fire, to the ſtate of grace in true faith and repentance, and ſo to life eternall. And looke how farre the ſoule is more excellent than the bodie, ſo farre doth this worke exceed any worke of mercie that concernes the bodie: Mercy towards the bodie is called *Almes* or *Releeſe*, whereby a mans outward neceſſitie, for food, raiment, or ſuch like, is ſupplied: that this is a worke of mercie, is manifeſt, Iſay 58. 10. where the *Releeving of the hungry*, is *the powring out of the ſoule unto him*: and Saint *John* maketh *the not releeving of our brother in need, to be the ſhutting of the doore of compaſſion from him.*

[f] 1 John 3. 17.

Now by this which hath beene ſaid concerning mercie, and the workes thereof, wee may ſee who is a *merciſull man*; namely, *ſuch a one as hath his heart touched with compaſſion towards the miſery of another, and thereby is moved to helpe and releeve him in ſoule and body, according to his eſtate:* and ſuch a man is bleſſed by the teſtimony of Chriſt himſelfe, howſoever in the world he may be deſpiſed.

A merciſull man.

Firſt, here we have to conſider, what a number of miſerable and curſed perſons doe live, even in the boſome of Gods Church; for if this rule of Chriſt bee true, then unmerciſull men are accurſed. Now ſuch are common among us: The Richer ſort which abound in outward bleſſings, thinke themſelves happie; but if they be unmerciſull, they are wretched: and ſuch are all thoſe, that for the maintenance of their outward pompe and braverie, ſpoile the poore that live under them, by incloſing of commons, racking of rents, unreaſonable fines, &c. or for the ſatisfying of their vaine pleaſure and delight, beſtow more upon hawkes and hounds, than on the poore: Such a wretched perſon alſo is the *corne-monger*, who hath his barnes full, and his garners full, and yet ſuffereth the poore to want bread, waiting ſtill for a deerer time: Such alſo are our common *uſurers, ingroſſers, and fore-ſtallers* of needfull commodities whatſoever: all theſe ſeeke themſelves, and have no mercy on them that are in miſery: yea, ſuch likewiſe are thoſe houſholders, who ſpend their time and wealth in ſome diſordered courſe, as whoring, gaming, drinking, or ſuch like, and ſo neglect their family: theſe [g] *denie the faith, and are worſe than Iewes and Turkes*, nay, than bruit beaſts, for they are merciſull towards their owne. It were

The uſe. The miſery of the unmerciſull, and their number.

[g] 1 Tim. 5. 8.

an eaſie thing thus to ſhew through all eſtates, the great multitude of miſerable perſons: for now the common proverb is become the common practice, Every man for himſelfe, and God for us all.

Motives to mercy.

Secondly, ſeeing the *merciſull man is bleſſed*, we muſt learne to put on tender mercie, or the bowels of compaſſion towards thoſe that be in miſery. And to move us hereunto, let us marke theſe things: Firſt, the ſtate of the merciſull is here pronounced bleſſed of Chriſt. Secondly, mercy is a gift of the Spirit, and the grace of [g] *Gods Elect*, which alwaies accompanieth the happy eſtate of thoſe that be in Chriſt: for the power of grace doth change their carnall nature, Iſay 11. 6, 7. Thirdly, hereby we become like unto God our heavenly Father, who is the [h] *father of mercies*. Fourthly, hereby wee are made inſtruments of Gods mercy to them that be in miſerie: for God conveyes his bleſſings unto his poore creatures ordinarily by meanes. Wee count it an high honour and a great favour to be the Kings Almner; oh then, how great is this dignity, to be Almner to the God of Heaven, to diſperſe his goodnes and mercies among the children of men? and hereto we are advanced, if we helpe the poore that be in miſerie. Fifthly, the exerciſe of mercy commendeth our Religion, not onely before men, but unto God: for [i] *pure Religion and undefiled before God is this, to viſit the fatherleſſe and widowes in their diſtreſſe:* and [k] *God will have mercy, and not ſacrifice:* therefore the Apoſtle bids, [l] *to doe good, and to diſtribute, forget not: for with ſuch ſacrifice God is pleaſed. This is the faſt* [m] *which God requires, to looſe the bands of wickedneſſe, to take off the heavy burthen, and to let the oppreſſed goe free, to take off every yoke:* and on the other ſide, *to breake thy bread unto the hungry, to bring the poore that wanders into thine houſe, and to cover the naked, &c.*

1
2
3
4
5

g Col. 3. 12.

h 2 Cor. 1. 3.

i Iam. 1. 27.

k Hoſ. 6. 6.

l Heb. 13. 16.

m Iſay 58. 5, 6.

Rules for the exerciſe of mercy. 2 Rule

And becauſe this dutie is ſo neceſſarie and excellent, I will propound certaine rules to bee obſerved for our furtherance hercin. Firſt, wee muſt exerciſe three of our ſenſes; *ſeeing, hearing*, and *feeling*, in other mens miſeries: for *ſeeing*, [n] we muſt be very wary it grieve us not *to looke upon our poore brother*, but wee muſt ſee and behold his miſery and diſtreſſe, whether it be in ſoule or body. This is the Lords practice: Iſrael is oppreſſed in Egypt, and the Lord ſaith, [o] *I have ſurely ſeene the trouble of my people, and the oppreſſion wherewith the Egyptians oppreſſe them.* And wee muſt be followers of God, as deare children, and learne to viſit them that be in miſerie, either through ſickneſſe, imprisonment, poverty, or ſuch like; for ſight will ſtirre up in a man a ſenſe and compaſſion of others miſeries. Hence it is ſaid, that [p] *when Ieſus ſaw a great multitude, he was moved with compaſſion towards them.* And who can ſee a poore diſtreſſed perſon to lie in ſtraw, or on the ground, without needfull releeſe, as many a one would not ſuffer his dogge to lie, and not to be moved with compaſſion? Secondly, if wee cannot come to ſee a mans miſerie, then wee muſt bee content to *heare of it*, and give heed and credit to the true reports that others make thereof unto us. Thus did *Nehemiah*, hearing of the affliction of the reſidue of the captivitie, [q] *He wept and mourned, faſted and prayed, and ſought for releeſe for them at the Kings hands.* Thirdly, for *feeling*, if the Lord ſhall afflict our bodies with ſickneſſe, or our ſoules with temptations, wee muſt bee willing to ſuffer the ſame patiently, that thereby wee may be fitted to take more compaſſion upon others in like caſe, and to comfort them the better. *Paul* ſaith of himſelfe and Timothie, that in [r] *Aſia they were preſſed with affliction above meaſure paſſing ſtrength, ſo as they altogether doubted of life: and yet* (he ſaith) *the Lord deals merciſully with them; that they might bee able to comfort others which were in any affliction, with the ſame comfort wherewith God had comforted them.*

n Deut. 15. 9.

o Exod. 3. 7, 9.

p Mat. 14. 14.

q Nehem. 1. 3, 4 and ch. 2. 5.

r 2 Cor. 1. 8.

verſ. 4.

Secondly, we muſt make our particular callings wherein we live, the inſtruments of mercie, and in doing the duties thereof ſhew forth compaſſion towards others. This rule is of great uſe, and therefore it will not be amiſſe to ſhew the practice of it in particular. The Magiſtrate muſt rule and governe in mercie: and the Miniſter muſt preach in mercie: every Sermon muſt be a worke of compaſſion towards the people, not onely for the matter which it containeth, but for the manner of his delivery, and in the ſcope and drift which hee aimeth at: he which preacheth otherwaies, doth barre himſelfe of all mercy, even then, when hee intreats of mercy unto others. There is a carnall and humane kinde of preaching, which now adaies takes place, wherein nothing is ſo much regarded as the vaunting of wit, memory, and learning, by fine contrived ſentences, multiplicitie of quotations, variety of allegations of Fathers, Schoolemen, and other learning: but herein is no mercy nor compaſſion to the poore ſoule. It is ſaid indeed, that none condemne this kinde of preaching, but they that cannot attaine unto it. But the truth is, God will have his word delivered, [t] *Not in the enticing ſpeech of mans wiſdome, but in the plaine evidence of the ſpirit, and of power:* and therefore a man cannot with good conſcience apply himſelfe to ſuch kinde of preaching, elſe no doubt a man of meane gifts might finde it more eaſie to attaine unto, than to the true preaching of Chriſt crucified. Thirdly, every private man muſt make the duties of his calling, workes of mercie: the rich man muſt know himſelfe to be, not a Lord, but a Steward of Gods bleſſings, and therefore muſt imploy and diſpenſe the ſame in mercie, by giving and lending unto the poore freely, as God ſhall miniſter unto him juſt occaſion. The trades-man muſt buy and ſell in mercy, dealing juſtly with the rich, and ſhewing liberality to the poore. The

1 Rule.

How to exerciſe mercy in our callings.

t 1 Cor. 2. 4.

matter that cals in mercie use the labour of his servant; and the servant thus in mercie doe service to his master, for conscience towards God. And happy were it with all estates, if this rule of mercy were observed: the want whereof, is the bane of all societies.

Rule.

Thirdly, for the more cheerefull practice of mercie, wee must lay aside some part of our goods, for the releese of them that be in miserie. The Jewes were commanded to set apart the first fruits of their corne and cattell, for the Lords altar: but in the new Testament the altar is ceased, and the poore come in stead thereof; and therefore we must now bequeath some thing for their releese. Many are given to great excesse in fare, and in attire; but they may doe well to abate some part thereof, and bestow it on the poore, for hereby will the rest bee sanctified to their more free and comfortable use: nay, in case of necessitie, we ought to sequester some part of our owne necessaries, for the refreshing of the poore; so did the Church of

2 Cor. 8. 2. [a] Macedonia, *even beyond their power, give to the releese of the afflicted brethren.* Men are exceeding cold in charitie, and one maine cause thereof, is want of observing this Rule, in setting apart some thing, according as God shall bleise us in our callings, for the releese of the poore.

The second point to bee considered in this Rule is, wherein this blessednesse doth consist; namely, *in the obtaining of mercy*: hee that shewes mercie, shall finde mercie, both with God and man. Where first, we may see the errour of the Church of Rome in their doctrine of merits: for they make a speciall part of humane satisfaction, to consist in Almes-deeds and releeving of the poore, teaching that a man may hereby merit eternall life: but they erre grossely; for then Christ would not have said, blessed are the merciful, for they shall finde mercie: but rather thus, they shall finde justice: for that which comes of merit, is due by right.

Merit. [b] Romans 11. 6.

2 Secondly, hereby we may see what to think of our Church, and Nation, in respect of the true Title to Gods mercie; for onely the merciful shall finde mercie. Now it were easie to goe thorow all orders and conditions of men among us, and therein to shew abundance of unmercifulnesse and cruelty; so as we may be justly called a cruell people, and therefore cannot looke for mercie at Gods hand: for to [c] *the mercilesse shall bee judgement without mercie.* This is evident by the Lords dealing with his people: for all their sacrifices and duties of religion were [d] *abomination unto the Lord, because their hands were full of blood:* and because they had no mercy, therefore they were led into captivitie, as wee may see at large, Jer. 5. 28. Ezek. 9. 9, 10. and Zach. 9. 12. Now we being in the same case with them for unmercifulnes and cruelty, have no doubt deserved long since the same punishment; even that the enemie should deprive us both of Gospel and peace, and of all

c Jac. 2. 13, 13, 15.

our prosperity and wealth: what then shall we doe? surely we must humble our selves by prayer and fasting unto the Lord, if not publikly, yet privately; every man and every family apart, even for this one sin of unmercifulnesse: and withall in this humiliation, begin to practise mercy, by bestowing that upon the poore, which we spare from our bodies in the day of our fast.

v. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

These words contain the *sixth Rule* of Christ, touching true happines; wherein, as in the former, observe two points: the persons blessed, and wherein their blessednesse consists. The persons blessed are thus qualified; *they are pure in heart.* This is diversly expounded: *By pure in heart*, some understand those that are chaste; others, those that are simple hearted, void of guile and deceit. But the words will beare a more generall sense, and betoken such as are holy in heart, having their hearts purged from the defilement of their sins, and be in part renued and sanctified by the holy Ghost: and that they are so to be taken, may appeare, Psal. 24. 4. whence these words are borrowed; where also the Prophet expoundeth the pure in heart to be such, [a] *have not lift up their minde to vaine things*: to which purpose, the Author to the Hebrewes saith, *Follow peace with all men, and holinesse, without which no man can see God.* Againe, the intent of our Saviour Christ in this place, was no doubt to crosse the Pharisaicall conceit of those times, whereby men did content themselves with outward holinesse, as sufficient to true happinesse; and therefore hee saith, *Blessed are the pure*, not outwardly, but *inwardly in heart.* Further, by *heart* we are to understand the soule, with the parts and facultiesthereof; that is, the *minde*, the *conscience*, the *will*, and *affections*. And that wee may yet conceive more clearely of this point, we are to search out two things; first, in what *manner*, then in what *measure* the heart is made pure. For the first, the purifying of the heart is by a two-fold Action of the holy Ghost; first, by creating in the minde a saving faith, which unites a man unto Christ, and as an hand apply-eth Christs purity, that is, his obedience to the heart: so *Peter* speaketh of the Gentiles, in the Councell at Jerusalem, that [y] *by faith the Lord purified their hearts.* Secondly, when a man is in Christ, the holy Ghost purgeth and sanctifieth the heart inwardly, by mortifying all the corruptions in the minde, will, and affections, and by putting into it inward holinesse, whereby the Image of Christ is renued therein. And this our Saviour Christ expresseth, Joh. 15. 2. when he saith, *that the father purgeth every one that bringeth forth fruit in him.* Now unto these the holy Ghost addeth an excellent grace of *Christian Resolution*, whereby a man hath a constant

Rule.

Who be pure in heart.

Chap. 12. 14.

The manner of purifying the heart.

y Act. 15. 9.

constant purpose not to sinne against God any way, either in thought, word, or deed; but in all things to please God continually; so as if at any time he sinne, it is against his resolution. Now for the *measure* of this purification, it is onely in part in this life; for the grace of sanctification is not perfect till death, as the Apostle saith; [a] *We receive but the first fruits of the spirit*: that is, not the Tenths, but as an handfull of corne to a whole field: the soule is freed from the punishment and guilt of sinne, and in some sort purged from corruption, but not wholly. This we must observe the more diligently, because the Papists teach otherwise; to wit, that after Baptisme and regeneration, sin is so taken away, that there is in man nothing that God can hate: but experience in every childe of God, sheweth this to be false. The chiefe ground of their opinion is this, that if sinne properly called, should remaine in the regenerate, then God should repute a man to be just, which is a sinner. But we answer, that God never reputeth an impenitent sinner just, but onely the repentant, and regenerate, which are by faith in Christ, and so in effect are no sinners, because though corruption remaine in them in part, yet it is not imputed to their persons: Besides, in the act of their conversion, corruption hath received that deadly wound, whereof it shall never recover, but daily die, till it be quite abolished, and therefore doth it not reigne in them. And thus we see in what manner and measure the heart is purified, whereby the *pure in heart* may be thus described: *They are such as believe the pardon of their sinnes in Christ, and be in part renewed in their soules by the holy Ghost, having their naturall corruptions mortified and abolished in some measure, and the graces of Gods image repaired in them, and a godly resolution wrought in their hearts, not to sinne against God in any thing.*

Pure in heart described.

Vses. 1.

Considering that the *pure in heart* be blessed, we must search our selves, and see whether our hearts be qualified with this grace: As in former times, so at this day inward puritie is much neglected. The ancient Jewes stood upon their legall puritie and righteousnesse, and the Phariſes after them, relied upon their outward holinesse; and the Holy Ghost foretold, that in [a] *the latter dayes should come perilous times*, by reason of sundry sinnes, whereof this is one, *that men should content themselves with a shadowed shewe of Godlinesse, and in truth deny the power thereof.* And doth not experience shew this to be true among vs? for the *pure heart* is so little regarded, that the seeking after it is turned to a by-word, and a matter of reproach. Who are so much branded with vile termes of Puritans and Precisians, as those that most endeavour to get and keepe the puritie of heart in a good conscience? Again, the generall ignorance that every where abounds, doth plainly argue the want of this grace; for what can be in the heart but impuritie and iniquitie, where there is no knowledge of the will of God in the minde? And for those that have more knowledge than the rest, generally they are not such crabbed unto it in practise; for take a view of all the markets in the land, and you shall hardly find a man that is set all his store, that will bee brought to abate one jot of the highest price, no not to the poore that stand in extreme need; which as it argueth a bloody and cruell heart, so it sheweth our times to bee evill dayes, wherein men professe much, and doe nought: which hee will draw Gods judgement upon us, and cause the Gospel to be removed and given to a nation, that with profession, will joyne the power of godlinesse in heart and life. What befell the [b] *fig-tree*, wherein Christ sought fruit, and found nothing but leaves, *was it not accursed?* and how shall we thinke to escape, if we be like unto it? [c] *For the earth that drinketh in the raine that falleth of upon it, and yet bringeth forth bryers and thornes is very nere unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.*

1 Rom. 8. 23.

Council. Trid. Rom. Sess. 5. 5.

B

b Mat. 21. 19.

c Heb. 6. 7, 8.

Secondly, if the pure in heart bee blessed, then we must labour to practise the counsell of the Prophet, [d] *Wash you, make you cleane*; and [e] *sanctifie the Lord in your hearts*: yea, as the Apostle saith, [f] *Let us purge our selves from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit.* Indeed it is the [g] *work of God to purifie the heart*, man of himselfe can no more doe it than a Black-moore can change his skinne: but yet every one that would feele in himselfe this work of God, must use the meanes wherein the spirit doth purge the heart; first, therefore wee must humble our selves unfainedly for all the sinnes and corruptions of our life already past, and for the time to come grow to a resolute purpose, not to sinne against God in any thing: which wee must testifie by a godly endeavour to obey him in all things: for a pure heart, and a purpose to live in any one sinne, cannot stand together: but this constant purpose not to sinne, is a notable grace, and a infallible token of a renued and sanctified heart.

d Isa. 1. 16.
e 1 Pet. 3. 15.

f 2 Cor. 7. 1.
g Act. 15. 9.

C

The second point in this Rule is, wherein this blessed state consists; namely in this, *that they shall see God*: for the understanding thereof two points must be handled. First, how God may be seene; Secondly, how the seeing of God is the happinesse. For the first, the Apostle saith, [h] *No man hath seene God at any time*: yea further, *Paul* calleth him, *a King of kings, whom never man saw, nor can see.* We must therefore know, that there is two fold sight in man, the sight of the eye, and of the minde; by the sight of the eye no man can see God in his essence and substance, which is most spiritual, and so invisible; for the eye seeth nothing but things corporall and visible: a man by his eye cannot see his owne soule, and much lesse the substance of God.

h 1 Tim. 6. 15. 1 Joh. 4. 12.

Heb. 11. 27. may be seen.

D

Object. 1. But [i] *Abraham*, and [k] *Moses* saw God, for he appeared unto them. *Answer.* They

i Gen. 17. 1.
k Exod. 33. 11.

They saw him not in his nature and substance, but in certaine created Images and similitudes, wherein God for that time did testifie his presence unto them: some indeed say, that though a man cannot see God in this life, yet in the life to come he shall see him with his bodily eyes. But this opinion is not true: for though the bodie shall then be perfectly sanctified, and the eye sanctified, yea glorified, yet still it remaines a true body, and a true eye, and therefore can not see the essence of God, which is invisible to the eye of flesh.

Job 19.26,27. *Object. II. I shall see God in my flesh* (saith *Job*) *and mine eyes shall behold him. Ans.* He speaketh there of God his Redeemer, who is not God simply, but God incarnate; for the word transsated *Redeemer*, signifieth one allied unto us in blood: now no man doubteth but God in Christ may be seene, as Joh. 14. 9. *He that hath seene me, hath seene my father.*

Object. III. 1 Cor. 13. 12. *We shall see him face to face. Ans.* God hath no face, and therefore that cannot be understood literally; but thereby is signified, that we shall have plentifull knowledge of God, as we have of him whom we see face to face.

Object. IV. If we shall not see God with our eyes, then they serve to no use in heaven. *Ans.* God forbid: for besides the glorious companie of all the Saints, we shall therewith behold our Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed us by his blood, and made us Kings and Priests unto our God, to whom we shall sing praise, and honour, and glory for evermore, Rev. 5. 12.

The second kinde of sight, is of the *minde*, which is nothing but the knowledge or understanding of the minde, and that is two-fold; imperfect in this life, and perfect in the life to come. In this life, the minde knowes not Gods essence or substance, but onely by the effects; as by his word and Sacraments; and by his creatures: and indeed, the speciall sight we have of God in this life, is by these his affects to conceive in our mindes how God is effected to us; as that God is our Father, and Christ our Redeemer, and the holy Ghost our Sanctifier. The perfect vision of God, is reserved to the life to come, where Gods elect shall see him in regard of his substance: for [m] *We shall see him as he is.* Yet that we be not deceived herein, wee must know that perfect sight is two-fold, *simple* and *comprehensive*: *Simple perfect sight* is, when man sees a thing wholly as it is in it self; and thus God is not seene by the minde of man. *Comprehensive sight* is, when the Creature seeth God, so farre forth as it is capable of his knowledge; and thus shall men see God in the world to come perfectly, and be filled therewith, though they know him not wholly, as he is in himselfe: even as a vessell cast into the sea may be perfectly full of water, though it receive not all the water in the sea. But some will aske, how shall the minde see God? *Ans.* The manner is such, as neither eye hath seene, nor eare

m 1 Joh. 3. 2.

A heard, neither can any man tell, but they onely that have fruition of it in heaven: yet certainly, such it is, as shall give full contentment to every one that doth enjoy it. But it shall be farre better for us, to seeke for a pure heart, whereby we may be assured of this blessed sight of God, than curiously to search how we shall see him: for to them that be of a pure heart, God will reveale himselfe perfectly, to their joy unspeakable and glorious.

The *second point* is, how this seeing of God can be true happinesse. *Ans.* A man that hath beene blinde, will count himselfe happie, when he receives his sight; and he that hath long lien in a darke dungeon, will count it a B blessed thing, to bee brought out to see the light of the Sunne: now if this bodily light be so comfortable, how endlesse is the joy of that heavenly light, which commeth from God himselfe? The [n] *Queene of Sheba* counted those servants blessed, that stood before *Salomon* to heare his wisdome; then doubtlesse the sonnes of God must needs bee happie, that stand before the Lord, hearing his wisdome and beholding his glory: [o] *For in his presence is fulnesse of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore. Moses* is renowned with all posteritie for this prerogative, that God vouchsafed [p] *to let him see his backe parts*: and Christs Disciples were so ravished with a glimpse of Gods glory in his transfiguration, that they would needs [q] *abide there still.* Oh then, what C glorie is it to see him as he is? doubtlesse this sight of God is true happinesse. But then (will some man say) the Devils shall be happie, for they shall see him at the last day. *Answ.* Their sight shall be their sorrow, for they shall see him as a terrible Judge, not as a Saviour, with apprehension and approbation of his love and mercie, which is the sight here meant: as the Apostle saith, [r] *We shall see face to face, and know as we are knowne.* So then the meaning of these words is this, they shall see God by his effects in this life, and perfectly in the world to come, with approbation of his love and mercie.

This gracious promise must be observed as a D ground of speciall comfort to all Gods children: for they that endeavour after puritie of heart, shall suffer much contempt and reproach in the world; but they must not be disminaed, for God will looke upon them, and shew himselfe favourably unto them: [s] *He will appeare to their joy, and their adversaries shall bee ashamed*: therfore they may say with *David*, [t] *I will not feare what man can doe unto me.*

Secondly, is it true happinesse to see God? then in this world we must strive to come as neere unto God, as possibly we can; for the nearer we come unto him, the more wee see him, and the nearer we are to our perfect happines. Now that we may come neere unto God we must set God alwaies before our eyes; that is, wheresoever we are, and whatsoever we doe, we

Hope this seeing of God is happinesse.

n 1 King. 10. 8.

o Psal. 16. 11.

p Exod. 33. 23.

q Mat. 17. 4.

r 1 Cor. 13. 12.

The 1 ser. 1. Comfort against reproach.

s Isa. 66. 5.

t Psal. 118. 6.

we must perswade our hearts that we are in his presence: this was *Davids* practice, Psal. 16. 8. *I have set the Lord alwaies before me*: this perswasion will make us to walke with God, as *Enoch* did, who for this is said [u] *to please God.*

u Heb. 11. 5.

Thirdly, this must allure our hearts towards all those meanes wherein God shewes himselfe unto his children: the Lord revealed himselfe in his sanctuarie unto his people, and hereupon *David* was ravished with desire to Gods courts; see Psal. 27. 4. and Psal. 48. 1, 2. And the like affection must we have to Gods Word and Sacraments, therein he shewes his beautie, as in his sanctuarie; and therefore we must labour therein to see the goodnesse and mercie of God towards us, using them as pledges of his grace and love in Christ: yea, we must endeavour to see him in all his creatures, as his wisdome, power and goodnesse to us-wards: this is a notable step to our perfect blisse.

v. 9. *Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.*

Here is the *seventh Rule* and precept of Christ touching true happinesse; wherein observe first, who are blessed; secondly, wherein this blessednesse consists. The parties blessed are *Peace-makers*. By *peace* we must understand concord and agreement betweene man and C man. Now peace is two-fold, Good, or Evill: *Good peace*, is that which stands with good conscience and true religion. This was among the converts in the Primitive Church, [x] who *lived together, and were all of one heart, and one soule. Evill peace*, is an agreement and concord in evil, as in the practice of any sin against Gods Commandements: in a word evill peace is such, as cannot stand with true Religion and good conscience. Hereof Christ spake, saying, [y] *I came not to send peace, but the sword*: that is, division by meanes of the Doctrine of the Gospel. Now in this place, *good peace* is the quality of those parties that be blessed. Further, by Peace-makers, two sorts of men are to be understood: first, all such as have care, so much as in them lieth, to have peace with all men, good and bad: secondly, such as not only themselves be at peace with others, but also doe labour to reconcile parties at variance, and to make peace betweene man and man; both these sorts are blessed, that is, they are in a happie state and condition, because this gift of *Peace-making*, is a grace of Gods spirit in them alone who are blessed: for where Gods spirit worketh peace of conscience towards God in Christ, there the same spirit doth move the partie to seeke peace with all men; as also to make peace betweene those that are at variance, so farre forth as it may stand with Religion and a good conscience. Yet here are certaine questions to be scanned touching peace, which will give

7 Rule.

Peace.

x Act. 4. 3.

y Mat. 10. 34.

A great light to the better understanding of this Rule.

Quest. I. Seeing Peace-makers are blessed, why should they be blamed which seeke to make peace betweene Papists and Protestants, by reconciling these two religions? *Answer.* Because this is not good peace, for there is no more concord betweene these two religions, than is betweene light and darknesse. Whereas it is said, they differ not in substance, but in circumstances, both having the same Word, the same Creed, and Sacraments; we must know, that notwithstanding all this, yet by necessarie consequent of their doctrine and religion, they doe quite overturne the foundation of the Bible, of the Creed and Sacraments: as in the B points of *Justification by workes*, of *humane satisfaction*, of *worshipping Saints and Images*, and their *massing sacrifice* and *Priesthood*, may soone appeare. But they have the same Baptisme with us? *Ans.* Baptisme severed from the true preaching of the Word, is no sufficient note of a true Church; for the Samaritans had circumcision, and yet the Lord saith [z] *they were not his people.* Against, they hold the outward forme of Baptisme, but they overturne the inward power by denying Justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ. Thirdly, Baptisme is preserved in the Church of Rome, not for their sakes, but for the hid Church which God hath kept to himselfe, even in the middest of all Popeirie: so C that if they returne to us, we shall accoid otherwise we may not goe to them, lest we forsake the Lord.

z Hos. 1. 9.

Quest. II. If Peace-makers bee blessed, how can any Nation with good conscience make warre? *Answ.* The Lords Commandement to *have peace with all men*, doth not binde men simply, but with this condition, [a] *if it be possible, and as much as in us lieth*: but when there is no hope of maintaining peace, then the Lord alloweth a lawfull warre, such as is for just defence, or claime of our needfull due and right: for herein the case standeth with the bodiy politicke, as it doth with the naturall body: while there is hope of health and safetie, the Physitian usth gentle meanes; but when the case is desperate, then he usth desperate meanes, and sometime gives ranke poyson, to trie if by any meanes life may be saved. And so may the safetie of a State be sought by warre, when Motions of peace will not take place.

a Rom. 12. 18.

Quest. III. How can suits in law be maintained with good conscience, seeing it can hardly stand with this blessed peace? *Answ.* So long as meanes of agreement other wayes may be had betweene man and man, suits in law should not be taken up; for *Paul* blameth the Corinthians, not only [b] *for going to law under heathen Judges*, but because they sawed for light matters upon small occasions: [c] *Why rather (saith he) sustaine ye not harme?* But if by private meanes we cannot get or hold our right, we may use the helpe of law.

b 1 Cor. 6. 6.

c verse 7.

Quest.

Quest. IV. How farre forth may one man, or one people be at peace with another? League or federitie betweene man and man, people and people, is twofold; either of concord, or of amitie. The *league of concord* is, when men bind themselves in peace one with another; and this may be had betweene all men, believers or unbelievers, good or bad; [d] *Have peace with all men*, (saith the Apostle.) *League of amitie* is, when men or people bind e themselves one to another in speciall love, beside their outward concord: and this kinde of peace ought onely to be had with true believers. Good king *Iehosaphat* is greatly blamed of the Lord, for making this speciall league with wicked *Ahab*; *Wouldest thou helpe the wicked*, (saith the Prophet) *and love them that hate the Lord? for this thing the Lords wrath is upon thee.*

d Rom. 12. 18.

e 2 Chron. 19. 2.

Iam. 1.

Whereas Peace-makers are blessed, wee are to be admonished, if it be possible to have peace with all men, as much as in us lieth; and within the compasse of our callings, to avoid all occasions of contention and strife: Saint *Pauls* exhortation must here take place, f *We must hold the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace.* To the effecting whereof, three vertues are there propounded for our practice; *Humility, Meekness*, and *Long suffering*. *Humility* is a vertue, whereby one man thinkes better of another than of himselfe; for this makes a man thinke basely of himselfe, in regard of his owne sinnes and corruptions, whereupon he is content to give place unto others, and to yeeld of his owne right, for the maintaining of peace: when as on the other side, pride causeth men to seeke for more than their due; and so causeth contention: as *Salomon* saith, g *only by pride doth man make contention*. *Meekness* is a vertue, whereby a man is gentle in behaviour towards every person, good or bad: this causeth a man to put up injuries, and to forbeare wrongs, when occasion of revenge is given him. *Long suffering* is a vertue, whereby a man doth beare with other mens wants, as morositie and hastinesse, and in bearing yeelds of his owne right, for the maintenance of peace thus dealt *Abraham* with *Lot*, when their herdmen were at variance, though he were the superiour both for age and place; yet for peace sake, he put *Lot* h *to cuhse the place of his abode, whether on the right hand or on the left*. Besides these, there are many other vertues propounded in the writings of the Apostles, for the maintaining of peace; to wit, *Humanitie*, when a man can so carrie himselfe towards all others, that he can take well all indifferent sayings and doings, and construe them to the best part, if it be possible. This is a most needfull vertue for Christian peace, which we must follow, and hereunto frame our nature and affections, which are crooked and rebellious of themselves, that so farre as is possible, we may have peace with all men; for peace is the bond of every society, of families, townes, and common wealths, without which no state can endure; and Christian religion commends the same unto us, Iam. 3. 17. *The wisdome which is from above, is pure, gentle, peaceable, full of mercie, and good fruits.*

f Ephes. 4. 3.

g Prov. 13. 10.

h Gen. 13. 8, 9.

i Humanitie.

Secondly, if Peace-makers betweene man and man be blessed, then much more happie are they, who make peace betweene God and man; and these are the faithfull Ministers of the Gospell, which set themselves wholly to reconcile men unto God: so *Paul* (speaking as a Peace-maker) saith, i *We beseech you as Embassadours of Christ, that yee be reconciled to God*: and therefore all those, that by Gods grace are set apart for this worke, must in sincerite set their hearts, and imploy themselves diligently for this end, to reconcile men unto God, and to bring them to peace with God; and in their owne conscience, this shall be a scale of the Lords mercie towards them, whereby they may assure themselves that they be blessed: for howsoever unto some, their ministerie may be the savour of death, yet they are are alwaies a sweet savour unto God in Christ.

i 2 Cor. 5. 20.

Thirdly, hereby we may see, what a blessed thing it is, in the day of Gods wrath against his people, to stand in the breach, and by earnest prayer to stay his hand, and so to make peace betweene God and his people by prayer. This was *Moses* practice many a time, for which he is renowned with all posteritie, Psal. 106. 23. Exod. 32. 10, 11. And so did *Aaron*, Num. 16. 47, 48. *David*, 1 Sam. 24. 17. and many others. This duty concerneth us, for God hath a controversie with our Land, for the innumerable crying sinnes hereof, as blasphemie, oppression, contempt of Religion, adulteries, and such like: now when we see the great mortalitie of our brethren, or heare of treasons and conspiracies, and rumours of wars by enemies, who threaten our overthrow; then must we know that God shakes his rod at us, and then especially is every one to intreat the Lord more earnestly for mercie and reconciliation: for this is a blessed worke of peace, to stay the Lord from the destruction of his people: Read *Isay* k, *Ieremie*l, *Ezekiel*m: sundry times *God complaines of the want of such, as should stand in the breach before him for the Land, that he should not destroy it*. Behold the weight and worth of this duty in *Abrahams* intercession for *Sodome*: for he so farre prevailed with the Lord, n that *If there had beene tenne righteous persons in Sodome, the whole citie had beene spared for their sakes*: but because there were none, so soone as righteous *Lot* was got out, it was burned with fire and brimstone from heaven, Gen. 19. 23, 24.

k Isa. 59. 16. and 63. 5.
l 1 Sam. 5. 7. and 12. 11.
m Ezech. 22, 30. 31.

n Gen. 18. 32.

Lastly, if Peace-makers bee blessed, the *Peace-breakers* are cursed: many there be of this sort, but above all, they are most notorious who disturbe the peace of the Land, which by Gods mercy we have for many yeares enjoyed. It may be thought we have none such among us, but only traitors, and such as plot with foren

raine enemies; but the truth is, all those doe disturbe our peace, that walke after their hearts lusts in sin and wickednesse, as *idolaters, blasphemers, oppressors, drunkards*, and such like; these are the peace-breakers, who cause the Lord to take away the blessing of peace: see Jer. 16. 5. the Lord saith, *He hath taken his peace from his people*: the reason is, v. 12. because *every one walked after the stubbornesse of his wicked heart, and would not heare him*: and Levit. 26. 23, 25. *The sword of the enemy is sent of God, to avenge the quarrell of his covenant*. It is then our transgression and rebellion against God, that will bring warre and rebellion into our Land; if this were not, our peace would continue for ever: for o *the work of justice shall be peace, quietnesse, and assurance for ever*. And againe, p *in righteousnesse shalt thou be established, and be far from oppression*. This therefore should move all ungodly persons to repent, and to breake off the course of their sinnes, unlesse they will continue professed enemies to the peace of the state under which they live.

o Isa. 32. 17.

p Isa. 54. 14.

The *second Point*, wherein this blessednesse of *Peace-makers* consists; namely, in that *they shall be called the children of God*: that is, they shall be esteemed and reputed for Gods children in this world, of God himselfe, and all good men; and in the world to come, fully manifested so to be. That this is true happinesse will soone appeare, by the view of the state of every child of God; for they are united unto Christ by the Spirit of grace, by which they are regenerate, and in Christ they are adopted for sonnes and daughters, and so enjoy Gods speciall grace and favour. Now hereupon they are Kings children, having God for their Father, who loves them most tenderly than any earthly Parents can love their owne children: secondly, they have Christ for their brother, and so are heires annexed with him, having Heaven and earth for their possession: q *In him they are made Kings and Priests unto God*: and shall be r *Judges of the world at the last day*: yea, they have the s *holy Angels for ministring spirits to attend upon their persons*, for their defence from the power of the enemie, which farre surpasseth the dignity of any guard of men on earth whatsoever: all things worke together for the best unto them, their crosses and afflictions are no causes, but fatherly trials and chastisements; yea, their sinnes are turned to their good; to them death is no death, but a sweet sleep unto their bodies, and a strait passage for their soules into eternall glorie: yea, in the act of death, they have the comfort of life in the joy of the Spirit, and the Angels ready, when breath departeth, to carry their soules to Heaven.

q Revel. 1. 5.

r 1 Cor. 6. 2.

s Heb. 1. 14.

The 1. use.

If this be true happinesse, to be called Gods children; then they that live after their owne wicked lusts, void of all care to keepe a good conscience, are miserable and accursed; for they are the children of the Devill, serving him in the workes of sinne, and expressing his Image in ungodlinesse and worldly lusts. It behoves men therefore in hand, if they have any care of true happinesse, to labour after regeneration: whereby, forsaking the lusts and courses of their former ignorance, and embracing and obeying sincerely the Word of life, they may become Gods children, and so happy.

Secondly, hast thou received this grace of Gods Spirit, whereby thou art inclined to have peace with all men, and to seeke for peace betweene God and thine owne conscience, yea, betweene the Lord and others? then comfort thy selfe, thou art the childe of God, these motions come from grace, flesh and bloud brings forth no such fruits: labour therefore to maintaine these good motions, with all other pledges of thine adoption, and so shalt thou grow fully assured of thine owne happinesse. In this age men make much adoe to get good assurance of earthly purchases: but what madnesse is this, so greatly to regard momentanie things, and to have no care, in comparison, of our eternall inheritance, which wee shall have assured unto us, when we become the children of God?

2

V. 10 *Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousnesse sake, for theirs is the kingdome of Heaven.*

11 *Blessed are yee when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evill against you for my sake, falsly.*

12 *Rejoyce and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.*

8 Rule.

Here Christ propounds his *eighth Rule* touching happinesse, which he handles more largely than the former: for having laid downe the Rule, v. 10. he expounds the same in a speciall application of it to his Disciples in the 11. and 12. verses. In the Rule it selfe, note two points; first, the parties blessed: secondly, wherein their blessednes consists. The parties blessed, are they *which suffer persecution for righteousnesse sake*. *Persecution* properly signifieth pursuit, such as one enemy maketh after another: but here the Word must be taken generally, for all kinde of persecution whatsoever. Now because it is a paradox, and absurd in humane reason, to think him blessed, that for any cause is persecuted; therefore Christ to verifie the truth hereof, repeats the same Rule in the next verse, where also he expounds every parcell thereof, wherewith I will content my selfe, because Christ is

the best interpreter of his owne words.

In the 11. verse therefore Christ sets downe three things, all pertaining to the true exposition of this Rule: First, he explaines more particularly the parties that bee blessed, saying to his Disciples, *Blessed are ye.* In the beginning of the Chapter, we heard, that he cast his eyes upon them, and spake unto them; and now here he doth the like against and therefore this Rule must not be understood of all men in the world that suffer, but of all Christs true Disciples; and generally it is not true, for the heathen and infidels, doe often suffer for good causes, and yet remaine infidels, without the true God, and so are not blessed. Against, a Christian professor may give up his life in a good cause, yet not of love to God or his truth, but upon ambition, and so not be blessed: for [a] *Though I give my body to be burned, yet wanting love, it profiteth me nothing.* Secondly, Christ expoundeth particularly, what hee meaneth by persecution, naming three parts thereof; first, *slandering and reviling*, which is the persecution of the tongue: Thus the Jewes persecuted the Apostles, saying, [b] they *were drunke*, or full *of sweet wine*: Thus *Festus* persecuted *Paul*, making him [c] *mad*, or *beside himselfe*. Secondly, *persecution*, meaning hereby (as the word doth properly signifie) first, *pursuit*, such as one enemie maketh after another, when hee seeks to spoile him of his goods, or of his life: secondly, the *bringing a man unto the Barre*, and there of malice to accuse and arraigne him: thirdly, *evill speaking with lying*, when as men of purpose be without cause maliciously carried thereunto, as when the Jewes called Christ [d] *a Samaritan, that had a devill*: and said that *he cast out devils by Belzebub the Prince of Devils*: and thus were the Christians in the Primitive Church persecuted, being maliciously accused for *killing their owne children*, for *worshipping the head of an asse*, for *incest*, and such like. To these three kinds of persecutions, S. *Luke* Chap. 6. 22. addes a *fourth*; namely, *hatred*: and a *fifth*, called separation, whereby men were excommunicated, and cast out of the Temple and Synagogues, for Christs sake and his Gospels. These are the severall kinds of that persecution, for the enduring whereof, Christ pronounceth men blessed, v. 10. whereof Hatred is the root, and the rest are branches. Thirdly, Christ layes down the cause, for which this persecution shall bee inflicted; namely, for *my sake*: or as S. *Luke* saith, *for the sonne of mans sake*: which expoundeth this phrase, for *Righteousnesse sake*, ver. 10. to wit, for professing, beleeving, and maintaining the doctrine of the Gospell taught by Christ, touching remission of sinnes, and life everlasting, to them that beleeve.

The uses in generall. We see that Christ urgeth this Rule of blessednesse more largely than the former: this hedoth for special cause; first, hereby hee would teach his Disciples, and us in them, that it is the will of God, his Church in this world should bee under the crosse, in such affliction and persecution, as their bloud should be sought for the maintenance of the faith. And this hee will have to be the state of his Church for speciall causes: First, that the members thereof by their afflictions, may be acquainted with their owne wants and infirmities, which they would not much regard, if they were freed from the crosse. Secondly, that by affliction they may be kept from many grievous sinnes, into which they would fall, if they lived in peace. Thirdly, that others seeing the correction of the Church for sinne, might learne thereby to hate and avoid sinne: and lastly, that the Church might glorifie God, in a constant and couragious maintenance of his truth unto death; for even in persecution is Gods truth preserved against the reason of mans wisdome, *Patient suffering for the truth, being faithfull witnesse-bearing thereunto.*

Secondly, Christ had newly called the Twelve out of all his Disciples, to be Apostles; whereupon they might thinke, that they should be advanced to some outward honour, ease, and peace: but Christ hereby calls them from that conceit, and puts them in minde of affliction, which should befall them in time to come; that when it came they might the better endure it. And thus he prepares all Churches to suffer affliction; yea, and wee our selves, must hereby learne in time of peace, to prepare our selves against the day of triall, because his will is, *That whosoever would live godly in Christ Iesu must suffer affliction.*

Thirdly, hereby Christ intends to lay a ground of comfort to his disciples in their persecution, by a plaine and full declaration of their happinesse that suffer for righteousnesse sake, in that they have sure title to the Kingdom of Heaven; out of which estate no found comfort can bee had. And this same must wee lay up in store against the time to come: for wee live now in peace by Gods mercie, but we know not how long it will continue; we have beene threatned, and dangerously assaulted by our enemies many a time, beside the rod of God shaken with his owne hand against us; and we may not thinke our peace will last alwaies, but seeing our sinnes increase, wee may bee sure our joy and peace will one day be turned into sorrow: and therefore it will be good to have this Rule ingraven in our hearts, that *they are blessed which suffer for righteousnesse sake.* If therefore tribulation come for the defence of the Gospell, wee must have recourse to this promise of blessednesse, and that will be our comfort.

More particularly. In the words of this Rule, *Blessed are they, &c.* Christ would let us see that deadly hatred which the world beares unto Gods Church; for so much the word (*persecute*) importeth: The reasons of this hatred may bee these; First, the Church of God in the ministerie of the Gospell, seeks the ruine of the devils kingdome, who is the Prince of the world; the devill

Matth. 5. vers. 10. &c.

1 Cor. 13. 3.

2

[a] Act. 2. 13.
[b] Act. 26. 24.

Luke. 6. 15.

[d] Joh. 8. 48.
[e] Luke. 11. 15.

Tertul. Apol. cap. 7. & 16.

Christ Church is this afflicted.

The world hates Gods Church: and why?

1

devill therefore rageth, and inflames the hearts of his instruments, with malice against Gods Church, that they may persecute and quite destroy it, if it were possible. Secondly, Gods Church is a peculiar people severed from the world in profession, doctrine, and conversation, and therefore the world hates them, Joh. 15. 16. And this very point may serve to stay our hearts when we shall be persecuted for the profession and embracing of the Gospell of Christ: for the world doth hate Gods Church, and will doe to the end: there must be enmitie between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, *As then he that was borne of the flesh, persecuted him that was borne after the Spirit, so is it now*, Gal. 4. 29.

Gen. 3.

Secondly observe, that this hatred of the world, is not onely against the members of Gods Church, but even against Christs holy religion; so Christ saith, *for my sake*, or *for my Religions sake.* This is to be marked as a most excellent argument to perswade our consciences, that the Gospell of Christ which we professe, is the true and blessed doctrine of God, because the wicked world doth alwaies hate it; yea, it hateth us also for the Gospels sake: now if it were a doctrine of men, it would fit their natures well, and they would love it, for the world doth love his owne, Joh. 15. 19.

Thirdly, if they be blessed that suffer persecution, then how may any man lawfully flie in persecution? *Answ.* A man may flie in persecution with a good conscience, these two things observed: first, that he be not hindered by his particular calling: secondly, that he hath liberte offered by Gods providence to escape the hands of his enemies. The intent of this verse, is not to forbid flight, but to comfort such as are in persecution, and cannot escape: for the word signifieth such persecution, as is by pursuit and oppression, which cannot be avoided.

Two Caveats about flight in persecution.

Lastly, seeing they are blessed that suffer for righteousnesse sake. Whether are they alwaies cursed that suffer deservedly for an evill cause, for the contrary reason is in contraries? *Ans.* They are alwaies accursed, save in one case; to wit, unlesse they repent for their unrighteousnesse, for which they are afflicted; but by true repentance they become blessed. The theefe upō the crosse had lived in theft, & was therefore attached, condemned, and crucified, and so he suffered for unrighteousnes; but yet he was saved, because he repented, and beleeved in Christ.

It is added, *for righteousnesse sake:* In this clause we are taught a speciall lesson; namely, that when God shall lay upon us any affliction or persecution; as imprisonment, banishment, losse of goods, or of life it selfe; wee must alwaies looke that the cause be good, and then suffer willingly. This is a necessarie Rule, for wee must suffer affliction either publikely or privately, if we will live godly in Christ Jesus. Now it is not the punishment, but the cause that makes a Martyr: and to this purpose *Peter*

A faith, [f] *Let none of you suffer as a Murtherer, a Theefe, or a busie-body; but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorifie God in this behalfe:* and therefore we must be sure the cause be good; yea, this we must take unto in our particular private exams.

1 Pet. 4. 15.

Verse 11. *Blessed are ye when men revile you, and persecute you, &c.* In handling the former verse, we shewed the meaning of these words, and how they serve to expound the former Rule. The point here to be observed is this, That *to revile and slander*, yea (as *Luke* saith) to *hate* a man for a good cause, especially for Religion, is persecution: which shewes how fearefull the common sinne of the age is, whereby men revile their brethren, with bitte and odious tennes, because they shew some care to please God, and to adorne their profession by a godly life. But thou art a persecutor whosoever thou art, that useth this, and therefore repent and leave it, for it is a preparation to a greater sinne in this kinde, and most odious in Gods sight, as the punishment hereof declares, Gen. 21. 9, 10. with Gal. 4. 29, 30.

S. *Luke* addes a second word, *And when they separate you*, whereby is meant excommunication out of the Temple and Synagogue; a punishment which Christ foretold should befall his Disciples. This censure was put in execution in their Synagogues: for besides the administration of civill Justice, Ecclesiasticall matters were there handled. Now marke what Christ saith, Though excommunication bee mine owne ordinance; yet *Blessed are ye when men excommunicate you out of the Temple and Synagogues, for my Names sake:* where he maketh excommunication a kinde of persecution, when it is denounced against men for righteousnesse sake.

Luke. 6. 22.

Here then we may learne what to thinke of the *Popes Bulls*, whereby hee excommunicates Kings and Queenes, and particular Churches, for denying subjection to his chaire: namely, that they are the Devils instruments, wherewith Gods children are persecuted, and that all such as are thus excommunicated, for defending the truth of the Gospel, are blessed: for excommunication is not the instrument of a cause to them that suffer it for a good cause. Secondly, hence we learne, that excommunication abused against Gods Word, is no powerfull censure, though in it selfe, being used according to Gods ordinance, it is a most terrible thunderbolt, excluding a man in part from the Church, and from the Kingdome of Heaven: and therefore all Churches must see, that this censure be not abused, for the abusers of it incurre the danger of the curse, and not they against whom it is unjustly pronounced.

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v. 12 *Rejoyce and be glad, for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.*

Here Christ draws a conclusion from the

former Rule; for having said in generall, *That they which suffer for righteousnes sake are blessed*, v. 10. and applied it in particular to his Disciples, ver. 11. hereupon he inferres, that they must rejoyce in affliction, even then, or (as *Luke* 6 saith) *In that day*: yea, they must *be glad*; which word signifieth exceeding joy, such as we use to expresse by outward signes in the bodie; as skipping and dancing; such [h] as *David* used to testifie his joy, for the retume of the Arke of God to his City. This is a most worthy conclusion, often urged and commended unto us in Scripture: James 1. 2. *Brethren, count it exceeding great joy, when ye fall into divers temptations.* Rom. 5. 3. *We rejoyce in tribulation, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience*: and Act. 5. 41. *The Disciples rejoyced, that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for the Name of Christ.*

Here wee learne then, that Gods Church and people, that suffer in a good cause, must rejoyce and be glad. This must bee remembred, for we have beene many times in great danger of our enemies for the Gospels sake: and it may please God to leave us in their hands, for our manifold sinnes, and great abuse of his heavenly blessings: which if he doe, what must be our behaviour? must wee be swallowed up with sorrow and griefe? no, but humbling ourselves for our sinnes, wee must remember for what wee doe suffer, and rejoyce and be glad in that behalfe; for though our outward man perish, yet the inner man shall bee revived.

Now because it is a hard thing to rejoyce in grievous afflictions, therefore Christ doth give two reasons to move them hereunto; first, from the Recompence of reward after this life, in these words, *For great is your reward in Heaven.* This point I have handled heretofore, and therefore I will here onely shew how the Papists abuse this Text, to prove the merits of mans workes of grace; for hence they reason thus, *Where there is a reward, there is merit: But in Heaven there is a reward for mans works of grace: and therefore in this life, there is merit by them.* To this it is answered divers waies: I will touch the heads of the principall. First, the word *reward* must not be understood properly, but figuratively; for Christs speech is borrowed from labourers, who after they have done their worke, doe receive their wages, which is the reward thereof: even so, after Christs Disciples and servants have suffered afflictions for the Name of Christ, at the end of this life they shall receive life everlasting. Secondly, when wee reade of wages and rewards in Scripture, we must not dreame of any thing due by right of debt and merit, but conceive thereby, that which is given by promise, and of meere mercie; like as when an earthly Father promiseth to his sonne, to give him this or that thing, if hee will learne; now the Fathers gift is not merited by the childe, but is freely given, the more to incite the childe to learne his booke. Thirdly, if wee understand reward properly; then wee must referre it, not to our sufferings, but to the sufferings of Christ: for there is no proportion betweene our sufferings, and life eternall: *The afflictions of this present life, are not worthy of the glory which shall bee shewed unto us*, Rom. 8. 18.

The second reason is taken from the example of the ancient Prophets; *for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.* In this Reason Christ intendeth two things; First, to teach his Disciples and us, that persecution for good causes, is no new or strange thing. Secondly, to comfort his Disciples and servants in their sufferings; for that thereby, they should bee made conformable to the ancient worthy Prophets, who were of old renowned among men, and ate now glorified of God in Heaven. Hereto wee must compare the words of *Luke* spoken to the same purpose: [i] *for after this manner did the Fathers to the Prophets.* By *Fathers* we must needs meane the ancient people of the Jewes, for here he speaketh to his Disciples and others that were Jewes by Nation. Now hence observe a strange point; to wit, that the ancient Prophets, who were most worthy men of God, were persecuted in their times, not so much by forreiners and enemies to religion, as by those that were outwardly members of the Church of God, and professors of Religion. This may seeme strange, that men living in Gods Church should grow to this height of impiety, to become persecutors of Gods Saints: but Saint *Stephen* giveth the reason hereof, namely, their [k] *hard hearts*, whereby *they resisted the Holy Ghost in the ministery of the Word*: for which God left them to themselves, so as they ranne headlong to this height of impiety, to persecute Gods dearest servants. The like we may see in these our daies: some that have bin professors, after long hearing, breake forth into open Atheisme, calling this into question, whether there be a God: and among others there is also to be seene as vile cruelty and oppression in their particular dealings, and as abominable filthinesse, as is to be found among the Heathen and Idolaters: all which, and many other enormous sinnes proceed from this; that though men professe Religion, yet they deny subjection to the Gospel preached, so as it is not in them a Word of power: for which cause, God in his justice gives them up to hardnesse of heart, to commit sinne without remorse. And therefore, if wee would escape the fearefull judgement of a reprobate sense, let us labour with feare and trembling to become obedient to the Word which we heare; for if we doe not glorifie God in the meanes, wherein he offers grace and mercy, God will be sure to glorifie himselfe in our deserved confusion.

Matth. 5. vers. 13.

h 1 Chron. 6. 22. 2 Sam. 6. 14, 16

i Luke 6. 23.

k Acts 7. 51.

Vse 1.

Popes merits on this ground.

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v. 13. *Yee are the salt of the earth,*

Matth. 5. vers. 13.

earth: but if the salt hath lost his savour, &c.

In this verse and the rest, to the 16. Christ propoundeth the *second branch of this Sermon*, touching the office of the Apostles, and in them of all Ministers; wherein, his intent is to move them to diligence in preaching the will of God to all people.

The Coherence of this part with the former, standeth thus: Christ had shewed before in divers precepts, that many are blessed, whereupon some might aske, how they should attaine to this happinesse, and to those graces of the Spirit, which make them fit for that estate? Christ here answers, that the preaching of the Gospel is the principall meanes to worke in their hearts those graces, to which true happinesse is promised. And because it is an excellent privilege to bring men to this estate, therefore hee exciteth his Disciples to diligence in this Ministerie by two Reasons, drawne from the properties of this worke, and propounded in two similitudes. The first is taken from *salt*, in these words; *Ye are the salt of the earth:* and amplified in the words following, to the end of the verse. The second is drawne from *light*, ver. 14, 15.

For the first: *Ye are the salt of the earth: ye*, that is, you whom I have called to be Apostles, and set apart for the worke of the Ministerie, *are salt*; not properly, but by resemblance; yet not in regard of their persons, but of their ministery; because hereby they were to season men for God, and to make them savourie both in heart and life: *Of the earth*; not of Judea only, but of the whole world, as may appeare by their commission, Matth. 28. 19. *Goe therefore and teach all Nations.*

Ministers must seeke to expresse the properties of salt.

From this description, both Ministers and people may learne their duty. *First, for Ministers*: by this title of *salt* here given unto them, Christ would teach them, first, how they ought to dispense the Word of God, both Law and Gospell; namely, so as they labour therein to expresse the properties of salt, whereto Christ alludeth in his Title. Now the properties of salt applyed to raw flesh, or fresh wounds are principally three: First, it will bite and fret, being of nature hot and dry: Secondly, it makes meats savoury unto our taste: Thirdly, it preserveth meats from putrifaction, by drawing out of them superfluous moistnesse. The Apostles therefore and other Ministers being salt, must not onely in generall deliver the Word of God unto the people; but withall apply the same particularly unto mens hearts and consciences, as salt is applyed unto meat: And that for three ends: First, the Law must be applyed to rippe up mens hearts, to make them see their sinnes; it must fret and bite them by the curse thereof to cause them to renounce themselves, and to cry with the Jewes, [l] *Men and brethren, what shall we doe?* Secondly, the Gospell must be preached, that men feeling their corruption, like rottennesse in their soules, may by the blessing of the Spirit bee thereby seasoned with grace, and so reconciled unto God, and made savourie in his sight. This is the end of the Ministerie, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *We are Embassadours for Christ, as though God did beseech you through us, wee pray you in Christs stead, that you bee reconciled unto God.* Thirdly, both the Law and the Gospell must be continually dispensed, that thereby sinne and corruption may bee daily mortified and consumed both in heart and life, even as superfluous humours are dryed up by salt; and this is the right dispensing of Gods Word: for every discourse upon a text of Scripture is not preaching, but hee that fo expoundeth and applyeth the word, that his ministerie may be salt unto his hearers, he it is that preacheth the Word indeed.

Secondly, Christ calling his Disciples salt, teacheth them and all ministers, that they themselves ought first to be seasoned by the Word: for how can they fitly season others by applying this salt unto their consciences, who never fest the biting of it upon their owne? Hee that is unseasoned himselfe may speak Gods Word, which God may blesse to the good of others: but yet in respect of himselfe, it is a riddle which cannot be understood.

Thirdly, this Title giveth good direction to every Minister for his manner of preaching: for if the Word of God alone be that savoury salt, wherewith mans heart is seasoned for the Lord, then it ought to be dispensed purely and sincerely, without the mixture of humane inventions. This was *Pauls* care, [m] *My word and my preaching* (saith he) *stood not in the inticing speech of mans wisdome, but in plaine evidence of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* Experience teacheth us, that salt by mixture with other things loseth of his savour: and so it is with the Word: Indeed there is a place for Arts and tongues, and humane learning with every dispenser of the Word, wherein hee may use them with great commendation, to wit, in his private preparation: but not in the publike dispensation, whereby he seasoneth mens hearts unto God; that the Word of God alone must doe, for to it alone belongs the promise of the spirit, Isa. 59. 21. And therefore hee must use great discretion in this ministerie, and labour so to speake that the spirit may take delight to accompany the same.

Fourthly, this Title teacheth all Gods Ministers by patience to possesse their soules, when the wicked doe fret and fume against them for their ministerie: for this is a testimonie that their ministerie is salt, and bites their corrupt consciences as it ought to doe: therefore they are to goe on with cheerefulnesse, endeavouring more and more to season their hearts herewith.

l Acts 2. 37.

m 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5.

Secondly, the people of God that heare his Word, may learne good inſtruction from this Title: firſt, hereby euery one may ſee what he is by nature, namely, like unto fleſh ſubject to corruption, nay, as unſavoury fleſh, and ſtinking carion in the noſtrils of God, for elſe what needed this ſalt? This therefore muſt move us to lay aſide all pride of heart, whereby wee thinke highly of our ſelves: yea, wee muſt become baſe and lowly in our owne eyes, in regard of the unſavoury taſte of our naturall corruption, elſe we ſhall never feele the ſeaſoning vertue of Gods holy Miniſterie.

Secondly, every one muſt hereby learne to ſuffer the word of reproofe, whereby his heart and conſcience may be ripped up, and his ſores of ſinne diſcovered; when we have a cut or a wound in our fleſh, we can be content to put ſalt upon it, to drie up the noiſome humours, that otherwiſe would corrupt; now can wee endure the ſmart of ſalt for the health of our bodies, and ſhall we not much more ſuffer the word of God to rippe up our ſinnes, and to mortiſie the ſame, for the ſalvation of our ſoules?

Thirdly, every one muſt give all diligence to be ſeaſoned thorowout, with this heavenly ſalt, that the thoughts of his heart, the words of his mouth, and the actions of his life, may bee all ſavoury and acceptable unto God in Chriſt: yea, in his converſation with men, hee muſt labour to ſhew, the power of this ſeaſoning: Coloſſ. 4. 6. *Let your ſpeech be gracious always, and powdred with ſalt:* that is, ſeaſoned by the Word, that it may ſavour of grace, to thoſe that heare us. If wee live under the Miniſterie of the Word, and be not ſeaſoned therewith, our caſe is dangerous; for therein it is of the nature of ſalt, which cauſeth barrenneſſe, where it ſeaſoneth it: as we may ſee in the practice of *Abimelech*, who ſowed [n] *ſalt in Shechem, to make the ground barren, and the place deſpiſed.*

Judg. 9. 45.

But if the ſalt have loſt his ſavour, wherewith ſhall it be ſalted: it is thenceforth good for nothing but to bee caſt out, and troden under the foot of men. Here Chriſt amplifieth the former reaſon, whereby hee moved his Apoſtles to fidelitie and diligence in their Miniſtery, by the danger of the contrary infidelitie, which is as unſavoury ſalt, incurable and unprofitable, and ſo ſubject to a fearefull curſe; and therefore (ſaith Chriſt) you had need to bee faithfull in ſeaſoning the world by your Miniſterie. In this amplification we may obſerve foure points: Firſt, the ordinary ſinne that doth accompanie the calling of the Miniſterie. Secondly, the danger of this ſinne. Thirdly, the unprofitableneſſe of ſuch a Miniſterie. Fourthly, the judgement of God due unto it.

I. Point. As other callings have their ſeverall faults, ſo hath the calling of a Miniſter, noted in theſe words; *If the ſalt have loſt his ſavour, &c.* Salt is ſaid to become unſavourie, when it loſeth that vertue and acrimonie which it hath in ſeaſoning that fleſh on which it is caſt. Now Miniſters are as unſavoury ſalt, when they become unprofitable in their Miniſterie, and either doe not, or cannot diſpence Gods word, for the ſeaſoning of mens ſoules, that they may bee acceptable to God, and reconciled unto him in Chriſt. In this calling there bee eſpecially foure kindes of unſavourie ſalt: Firſt, the *blind watch-men* that have not knowledge; [o] and *dumbe dogs that cannot barke*: that is, ſuch as either cannot, or if they can, will not diſpence Gods word, for the ſalvation of mens ſoules. Secondly, *Heretically Teachers*, who preach falſe and damnable doctrine, ſuch as doth not ſeaſon, but poyſon and deſtroy the ſoule: ſuch were the falſe Prophets among the Jewes, who enticed to Idolatry, Deut. 30. 1, 2. and the falſe Apoſtles, and Heretickes in the Primitive Church, [p] *whoſe words did fret as a canker, & deſtroyed the faith of many.* And ſuch are the *Romiſh teachers* at this day, and the Jeſuits and Seminaries among us, who though they be qualified with many good gifts of learning, yet by mingling the word of God with their owne inventions, and humane traditions, they raſe the foundation, they become unſavoury ſalt, and heretically Teachers. And here by the way, who cannot but lament, that ſtudents in Divinitie, ſhould ſo much affect the Poſtils and Comments of Fryers and Popiſh writers, as they doe? doubtleſſe it argueth that the Word of God hath not ſeaſoned their hearts; for where ſuch unſavoury ſalt hath reliſh, the wholeſome doctrine of Gods word hath never ſeaſoned. Thirdly, they are unſavoury ſalt, who teach true doctrine, but yet *miſ-apply* the ſame. Many ſuch were in the Church of the Jewes in the dayes of [q] *Jeremy*, and [r] *Ezechiel*, who much complaine of *ſewing pillowes under the elbowes of the wicked*, by preaching peace unto them, when they ſhould have called to repentance by the diſcoverie of their ſinnes, and denunciation of Gods judgement: as alſo, for *making ſad the hearts of thoſe whom God had not made ſad.* And ſuch are thoſe at this day, who have ſmooth tongues, in reſpect of ſinne, and yet are full of bitter invectives againſt the better ſort. By this meanes the Word of God loſeth his acrimony and ſharpneſſe, whereby the wicked ſhould be awaked out of their ſlumber of ſecuritie, and the godly further ſeaſoned, and made more acceptable unto God. Fourthly, they are unſavourie ſalt, who though they teach the truth, and generally apply it well, doe yet lead ungodly and ſcandalous lives: for an offenſive and unſavorie converſation in the Teacher, doth hinder the ſeaſoning vertue of the word of his Miniſterie in the hearts of the people; and his doctrine cannot ſo much edifie, as his courſe of life deſtroyeth, becauſe naturall men regard not ſo much what is ſaid, as what is done. This being ſo, all Gods Miniſters

Foure kinds of unſavoury Miniſters.

1

o Iſa. 56. 10.

2

p 2 Tim. 2. 17, 18.

3

q Jer. 23. 16 17.
r Ezech. 13. 10, 22

4

ſiers, and thoſe alſo that deſtinate themſelves to this calling, muſt have ſpeciall care, ſo to be qualified for this worke, and ſo to preach the Word of God, that it may bee ſavourie in the hearts and conſciences of them that heare it. This is a matter of great importance, as well in reſpect of the Miniſter, as of the people; and thus ſhall it appeare, that they are not onely no unſavourie ſalt, but even ſuch as doe ſeaſon others.

II. Point. The danger of this ſinne, in being unſavoury ſalt (that is unfaithfull in the Miniſterie) is very great, noted in theſe words; *Wherewith ſhall it be ſalted?* Some referre this ſalting to the earth, as if Chriſt had ſaid, wherewith ſhall the earth be ſalted; but it doth more truly belong to the ſalt it ſelfe, as Marke 9. 5. *Salt is good, but if the ſalt be unſavourie, wherewith ſhall it*, that is, *the ſalt it ſelfe bee ſeaſoned?* Againe, the interrogation *wherewith*, imports a vehement denial; as if Chriſt ſhould ſay, If ſalt once loſe his naturall propertie of ſaltneſſe, it can never bee recovered: now unfaithfull and unprofitable Miniſters are unſavoury ſalt; and therefore their danger is exceeding great. And yet the compariſon muſt not ſo bee urged, as thereby to prove the ſtate of Miniſters to bee incurable, if they once become unfaithfull: but Chriſts meaning is, to ſhew that unprofitable Miniſters are very hardly, or ſeldom ever made ſavourie againe; at leaſt, if formerly they have beene faithfull, and after have fallen from it. That this is the true meaning, may thus appeare; for notes of negation in [s] Scripture, doe not alwaies import an abſolute denial, but ſometimes they are put to expreſſe great difficultie, and to ſhew things that ſeldome come to paſſe: Mat. 23. 33. *O generation of vipers, how ſhould you eſcape the damnation of hell?* that is, very hardly: And ſo where it is ſaid, that *David did not decline from the way of the Lord ſave in the matter of Vriah*: that is, *very ſeldome*: for he ſinned grievoully in [t] *numbring the people*: ſo Matth. 13. 57. *A Prophet is not without honour* (that is, very ſeldome) *ſave in his owne country*; for ſometime hee may be diſhonoured elſewhere; and ſometime alſo, have honour in his owne country: So in this place, this reſemblance of incurableneſſe in unfaithfull Miniſters, muſt bee underſtood, of great hardneſſe and difficultie; not of an impoſſibilitie, as experience alſo teacheth: for King *Salomon* was a Prophet of God, who by his adulteries and idolatry, became wonderfull unſavory, and yet no doubt, he afterward recovered, and became ſavoury againe by true repentance, whereupon hee penned the booke of Eccleſiaſtes: ſo *Peter* by his deniall of Chriſt, became unſavoury; yet by Gods mercy upon his repentance, he was ſeaſoned againe.

[s] Asno: not: never: and interrogations importing denialll.

[t] 2 Sam. 24.

This then is the danger, that Miniſters declining from fidelitie, doe ſeldome or hardly recover: the reaſon is; Firſt, becauſe they want teachers to inſtruct them, as they inſtruct the people: Secondly, the word in them is unſavory which ſhould ſeaſon them, and ſo there is no other meanes to recover them ordinarily. Goe thorow all ages, and obſerve the examples of falſe Prophets in the old Teſtament, of falſe Apoſtles in the new, and of Arch-hereticks in the Primitive Church; and hardly ſhall you find any that repented: yea, marke ſuch Miniſters as in our age incline to Poperie, and for the moſt part they become irrecoverable. Hereby then every Miniſter is taught to learne and practiſe *Pauls* leſſon to *Timothy*, *To take heed unto himſelfe, and unto learning, continuing therein, fighting a good fight, having faith and a good conſcience.* Theſe things *Paul* doth notably urge in that Epiſtle, giving good direction to attaine thereunto: 1 Tim. 4. 13, 14, 16. and 6. 11, 22.

III. Point. The unprofitableneſſe of unfaithfull Miniſters, expreſſed in theſe words; *It is thenceforth good for nothing*: that is, as unſavoury ſalt, becomming unfit to ſeaſon meat, is good for nothing; (for caſt it on the ground, it makes it barren; nay, caſt it on the dung-hill, and it hurts that alſo which otherwiſe ſerves for good uſe:) ſo is it with Miniſters that become unfaithfull, they are of all other moſt noiſome both to the Church, and common wealth; for Gods curſe is upon them, and they are good for no ſocietie. This might be declared by many examples, of ſuch as having fallen to Poperie, from our Miniſterie, have after proved not onely deadly enemies to our Church, and to the truth, but the rankeſt rebels and Traitors unto our Prince and State, of all others.

Queſtion. Whether may ſuch Miniſters as become unſavourie ſalt, by making Apoſtacie from the truth (as if a Proteſtant Miniſter become a Maſſe-Prieſt) bee reſtored againe into the Miniſterie of Gods Church, upon their repentance? *Anſwer.* Some bee of minde that they may not be received at all into the Miniſtery, after ſuch Apoſtacie: but I finde nothing in the Scripture, which ſhould hinder their reſtitution, if their converſion unto God, and to his truth, may appeare to be true and unfeined. It is alleaged, that the *Prieſts*, under the law, falling to Idolatry, [u] were for ever debarred from the Prieſts office? *Anſwer.* That was for ſpeciall cauſe; for the Prieſts were types of Chriſt, and their outward holineſſe ſhadowed out the perfect integrity & holineſſe of our Saviour Chriſt: for which cauſe there was none choſen to the Prieſts office, who had any blemiſh in his body. Now by ſuch open Idolatry, they diſfigured themſelves from being figures of Chriſt; and therefore were rejected. Againe, we find that inferiour officers, were not debarred from their office in the Sanctuary, though they committed Idolatry as the Prieſts did. It is ſaid againe, that a Miniſter muſt be unblameable; but a Maſſe-prieſt cannot be unblameable. *Anſw.* Without true repentance none is unblameable; but by true

[u] Ezek. 44. 12, 13.

true repentance, even a Masse-Priest may become unblameable. But such as fall away, become unsavourie salt, which cannot be made savourie againe? *Answ.* By the power of God it may; and so may an unfaithful Minister through Gods mercie be renued by repentance, and become profitable to the Church.

IV. Point. The curse and punishment of unsavourie salt: *It is cast out and troden under foot of men:* whereby Christ signifieth, that unfaithfull and unprofitable Ministers, shall bee condemned both of God and man: Hos. 4. 6. *Because thou hast despised knowledge, therefore also will I despise thee.* Mal. 2. 9. *Therefore have I made you to bee despised and vile before all the people; because ye kept not my way, but have bin partiall in the Law.* See the signe of the Lords contempt, in his fearefull judgements upon them; as on *Nadab* and *Abihu*, Levit. 10. 1, 2. *Hophni* and *Phineas*, 1 Sam. 2. 24. And though they may escape his hand in this life, yet will Christ at his comming, [u] *Cut them off, and give them their portion with Hypocrites, where is nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

[u] Luke 12. 48. Colos. 3.

The consideration whereof, must move all Ministers to beware of unfaithfulnesse in their calling, lest the curse of unsavourie salt light upon them. The Carpenters who builded *Noahs* Arke, were themselves drowned in the flood; because neither *Noahs* preaching, nor their owne working did move them to repentance: And the like judgement will befall unfaithfull Ministers; though they have the name of such as should season others, yet because of their unfaithfulnesse, they become unsavourie; God himselfe at length will cast them out, and tread them under foot. If this were laid to heart, as it ought to bee, it would drive many from their idlenesse, vanitie, and covetousnesse, whereby they become unsavoury unto God.

v. 14 *Ye are the light of the world: a City that is set on a hill, cannot be hid.*

15 *Neither doe men light a candle, and put it under a bushell, but on a candlesticke: and it giveth light to all that are in the house.*

16 *Let your light so shine before men, &c.*

Here Christ layeth downe the second reason, to induce his Disciples, and in them all Ministers, to preach the Word of God faithfully; as if he should say; By calling you are the light of the world, and your condition is such, that all your sayings and doings are open to the eyes of men: therefore be ye carefull that ye glorifie God therein. The first part of this reason, is in these words; *Ye are the light of the world:* the second is expressed by two comparisons, in the words following; *A city that is set on a hill, &c.* the conclusion in the 16. v.

Matth. 5. vers. 14. &c.

For the first part: *Ye are the light of the world.* If Ministers be lights, why saith the Scripture, that *John Baptist was not the light of the world?* Joh. 1. 8. *Ans.* There be two kinds of lights, Originall and Derived: *Originall* is that, which is the cause of all light; and so *Christ alone is the light of the world:* and in this sense doth the Scripture deny *John Baptist to be that light. Derived light* is that which shineth forth, but yet is received from another; and so [x] *John Baptist was a burning and a shining lampe:* so were the Apostles lights, [y] *For God that caused the light to shine out of darknesse, shined into their hearts, to enable them to give the light of knowledge in the face of Iesus Christ.* And so must these words be understood, that whereas the world naturally sits in darknesse, and in the shadow of death, the Apostles by the light of their ministerie were to shine unto them.

x John 5. 35.

y 2 Cor. 4. 6.

The use: First, this title of *light* given to Ministers, sheweth the right use of the Ministerie of the Word. The whole world lieth in darknesse, that is, in ignorance under sinne, and so subject to damnation by nature; now God hath ordained the Ministerie of the Word to bee a light, whereby this ignorance may be expelled, and they brought to the knowledge of their sinnes, and of the way that leadeth unto life: Act. 26. 18. *Paul must preach, that both Iewes and Gentiles may come from darknes unto light.*

Secondly, by this Title, Christ sheweth how his word is to be handled; namely, so as it may be a light unto mens minds and consciences, to make them see their sinnes, and their great miserie thereby; then, to let them see the remedy from that miserie, which is Iesus Christ: and lastly, to shew them that strait way of obedience in all good duties to God and man, which God requireth in this life of a Christian. Men may take long discourses upon a Text of Scripture; but that onely is true preaching, which gives this light of knowledge to the minde and conscience, which leadeth men to God.

Againe, the hearers of the Word must be admonished of their duties from this title. First, if Ministers be lights in regard of their Ministerie, then every hearer must so apply his heart unto the preaching of the Word, that it may inlighten his conscience with the knowledge of his sinnes, and of his miserie by reason of them; as also, with the true knowledge of Christ, and of the will of God, which may guide him in obedience: otherwise, this holy ordinance, turneth to his deeper condemnation.

Secondly, every hearer must learne *Pauls* lesson, Eph. 5. 8. *Ye were once darknes, but now ye are light in the Lord; walke as children of the light:*

light: that is, looke what the Word teacheth, which is this light, that doe. When the time is darke wherein we walke, we use Torches and Candles, that so we may see the right path: behold, the world is darknesse, we therefore must labour to have the Word of God to be a light unto our feet, in all the steps of our callings wherein we live; *For hee that walketh in the darke, knoweth not whether he goeth,* Joh. 12. 35.

Lastly, there be many that live in ignorance, as blinde, as though they had never heard of Christ; and though they heare the Word preached, yet still they remaine in darknesse: but they must know, that their case is fearefull, for the Ministery of the Word is *light:* they therefore having the benefit thereof, ought to bee children of the light: and because they are not enlightened, undoubtedly a most fearefull judgement of God is upon them; for marke what *Paul* saith, [z] *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to those that perish, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their minde:* and therefore, such persons must labour to know and practise the speciall grounds and duties of true Religion, that so in conscience they may be truly assured, that the word of God is become their light.

z 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

The second part of this reason, is this; *Your condition is such, in regard of your calling, that all your sayings and doings are seene of men:* and it is expressed by two similitudes: First, of *a City set on a hill, which cannot be hid:* Secondly, of *a candle put on a candlesticke,* vers. 15. And thus it dependeth on the former part: Whereas Christ had called his Disciples the *light of the world,* they might take it for a matter of some outward renowne: Christ therefore tells them, that his intent herein, is not to give them titles of praise, but to make them acquainted with their hard condition, in which they were like to bee, by reason of their great and weightie calling; wherein they should become spectacles to all the world: for thus hee saith, *A City that is set on a hill, cannot be hid:* but all that passe by may see it: and *A Candle lighted and set on a candlesticke, giveth light to all that are in the house;* even so, you mine Apostles, by reason of your publike calling, shall have all your sayings and doings manifest to the eyes of the whole world.

Because both these similitudes serve to expresse the same thing, therefore the points of instruction, which specially concerne Gods ministers, shall be propounded from the joynt scope of them both. First, whereas the condition of Gods Ministers is such, to have their whole conversation open and manifest to the eyes of the world; therefore they especially, above all others, (though it concerne every man in his place) must have care that their lives and conversations, both for sayings and doings, be holy and blamelesse: for their place is such, that by their well doing, they win many unto the Lord; but by their bad conversation, they carry many a soule with them to destruction. 2. Hereby they must learne, not to think it strange, if they lie open to manifold reproaches and abuses, more than any other sort of men: for they of all other, lie most open to the world; and if their conversation be godly, it is the more distasteful to the world: as *Cain hated Abel for his good workes,* 1 Joh. 3. 12, 13. Hence it appeareth, that men in this calling, cannot without great sinne, hide the gifts and talents which God hath given them: for they are as lighted candles, which must not bee put under a bushell. Sundry men have heretofore offended this way, as those in the Primitive Church, who being godly men and well qualified for the Ministery, did yet withdraw themselves from publike societies, to live in solitary places: for by their gifts they were excellent lights, and therefore they ought to have shined forth to others. And at this day they offend this way, that will not abase themselves in their Ministerie, to speake plainly to the meane capacity of the simple: yea, they also put the light under a bushell, who being fit for this Ministerie, do spend their daies wholly in the Universities, except it be that they want a calling into the Church, and have a lawfull calling for their stay in the Universities: and though men have not much meanes of calling forth, as were to bee wished, yet they that live in Schooles of Learning, ought to shew themselves willing to become lights abroad in the Church; saying with the Prophet *Esay,* when his lips were touched with a cole from the Altar, [a] *Here am I, Lord, send me.* In a word, all persons in this calling, that any way hide their gifts, are here blamed: for they are lights which should not be hid.

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3

a Isa. 6. 8.

From these comparisons, wherein Christ sets out the open state of his Apostles to the view of the world, the Papists doe gather, *that the Church of God cannot be hid,* and therefore *visibility* must needs be the note of a true Church. But we must know, that Gods Church may sometime lie hid in regard of the Word, and the Ministerie thereof; as it did in the *dayes of* [b] *Elias,* and in the time when Popery spread it selfe over these Westerne parts. Neither doth this place make ought against us for Christ here speakes of his Apostles, and of their ministerie properly, which could not be hid; and not of every ordinary Minister who are not lights of all the world, as the Apostles were, but only in their particular standing. Secondly, the Ministerie is a light, yet not always shining to the whole world: and therefore it is added in the second similitude, that *It giveth light to them that are in the house:* that is, in the Church of God. And so in the darknesse of Popery, the Ministery of the Gospell was hid from the world, and yet it gave some light to the hidden Church, the house of God, to shew them their calling, and the meanes of salvation.

Rhemists on this place.

b 1 Kin. 19.

Now, as these similitudes concerne the Ministers, so they may well bee enlarged to every Christian

Matt. 5. verse. 16.

Contrarie to this place, for in this regard the Minister is a patterne to his people, & many times in Scripture others besides the Ministers are called lights, 2 Sam. 21. 17. *David* is called *The light of Israel*; not only for the comfort of his Regiment, but also as hee was a King, by his upright life he gave light to the people, whereof he was governour: And so answerably, all Superiours in their places must be lights: the publike Magistrate to the Common-wealth; the master to his servants; parents to their children; and every Christian to his brother: Philip. 2. 15. *Shine as lights in the world, in the middest of a naughty and crooked nation.* This therefore is our duty, if we be Christians: as we must labour to get the knowledge of Gods will into our hearts, so must wee cause the power thereof to shine forth in the example of a good life, whereby others may bee directed in the darknesse of the world. But alas, herein the case of many is lamentable, who through ignorance and disobedience, be yet in darknesse: these must be taken out of their places, as darke candles, and trodden under foot, and so cast into eternall darknesse, where they shall flame in wee for evermore.

v. 16 *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your father which is in heaven.*

This is the conclusion of this reason; where, by *shining*, is meant ministerial teaching, whereby they make knowre Gods will unto his people, wherewith he also requireth answerable practice in a godly life: as if he should say, Seeing by our calling you are so conspicuous to the world, therefore looke to the evidence of your Ministery, and to the holinesse of your lives, that so the people may not onely heare your doctrine, but also see your good workes, and thereby be moved to follow the same, and so to glorifie God in Heaven.

A most worthy conclusion, wherein observe two points touching the ministry of the word: First, in what manner Ministers must teach the Word. Secondly, the end of all teaching. For the first: Gods Word must first bee preached, that men may heare it: secondly, therewith must goe an unblameable conversation, bringing forth good workes that men therein may see the will of God. Here then are two parts of a Ministers office, *Doctrine* and *good life*: and they must goe together in him that is a good Minister. He that teacheth to write will first give rules of writing to his Schollers, and then set them copies to follow: and so doth every master in his Art: there is no learning of any thing, unlesse examples goe with rules. Againe, God will have men to learne his will two waies: by Hearing, and Seeing: the Minister

The parts of a Ministers office.

A therefore that is to teach Gods will, must not onely by doctrine instruct the eare, but by a godly life exemplific his doctrine unto the eye: 1 Tim. 4. 12. *Be unto them that beleeve, an example in word, and in conversation.*

In regard of this double charge, that lies on every Minister, the people for their parts, must remember, in all their prayers to crave of God that the Ministers may bee enabled to teach Gods will both in doctrine and life. The Apostle *Paul* doth sundry times require the Churches to whom hee writ, to pray for him in regard of his [c] Ministerie. Now if so worthy an Apostle had need to be prayed for, much more hath every ordinary Minister in Gods Church. And great reason it should be so, for *the Devill stands at* [d] *Iehoshuahs right hand to resist him*: [e] he hindred *Paul from comming to the Thessalonians.* Though he maligne every beleever, yet he aimes especially at the Minister, that he may cause him to faile, if not in teaching, yet at least, in the exemplifying of his doctrine by a sincere and godly conversation.

Vse.

c Rom. 15. 30. 2 Cor. 1. 11. Eph. 6. 19. Colossi. 4. 3. 2 Thess. 3. 1.

d Zach. 3. 1.

e 1 Thess. 2. 18.

Now, because Christ requires of every Minister, besides teaching, the evidence of good works in a godly life, therefore here will I handle this point of good workes: and first, shew what a good worke is, secondly, the differences of good works: and then observe the necessity, the dignity, and use of good workes.

Of good workes.

1. Point. A good worke is a worke commanded of God, and done by a man regenerate in faith, for the glory of God in mans good. First, (I say) it is a worke *commanded of God*, for Gods will is goodnesse it selfe, and the Rule of all goodnesse in the creature; and every good thing is therefore good, because it is answerable to the wil of God: no worke therefore can be good, unlesse it bee appointed, ordained, and commanded of God: men indeed may invent and doe many good workes, but they shall have no goodnesse in them, unlesse they do accord with Gods will. Againe, good works must be done *in obedience to God*: now, unlesse God appoint them, the doing of them cannot bee any obedience to his will. Thirdly, *will-worship*, whereby men thrust upon God their owne inventions for his service, is every where [f] condemned: and of like nature be all these actions, wherein men of themselves doe fasten goodnesse, without the will and appointment of God. This point must bee remembred, because the Church of Rome doth teach the contrary, That a man may doe good workes, not required, or appointed by God: but the former Reasons shew this to be false; and the arguments which they bring for their opinion, are nothing but abuse of Scripture, as in these few may plainly appeare.

A good worke described.

f Col. 2. 22, 23. Deut. 12. 32.

Bellarm. de Monac. l. 2. c. 7.

First, they say, the *Iewes* had *free-will offerings*, which were not commanded in the word, and yet were acceptable unto God; and so doe many now adaies many good workes acceptable to God, though not commanded. *Ans.* Their free-will offerings were ordained of God, and

Object. 1.

g Levit. 7. 16.

and therefore were acceptable: they were only free, in regard in the time of offering them; but for the manner how, and the places where they must be offered, both these were appointed of God.

Object. 2.

h Psal. 106. 30, 31.

Againe, they say, *Phineas* [h] slew *Zimri* and *Cosbi* with Gods approbation, though hee was no Magistrate: and therefore workes not commanded of God, may be acceptable unto him. *Answ.* Though *Phineas* had not any outward Commandement, yet hee had that which was answerable thereto; to wit, an extraordinarie instinct by the spirit, whereby he was carried to do that fact; which was as much, as if God had given him an expresse commandement. And so we may say of the Ministerie of sundrie ancient Prophets, who by extraordinary instinct were moved thereunto: and upon this ground did [i] *Elijah* slay *Baals* Prophets.

i 1 Kings 18. 40.

Thirdly, *Maries* fact (say they) *in* [k] *powring a box of costly ointment on the head of our Saviour Christ*, was a good worke; and yet there was no commandement for it in Gods Word. *Answ. Maries* fact was a worke of confession, whereby shee testified her faith in Christ, and so was generally commanded, though not in particular. Againe, she was carried thereto by a speciall instinct of the spirit, for [l] *she did it to bury him*, (as Christ himselfe testifieth) because his buriall was so speedy after his death, in regard of the approaching of the Sabbath, that they could not embalme him, as the manner of the Iewes was; now every instinct of Gods spirit in the conscience of the doer, hath the force of a particular commandement.

k Matth. 26. 7.

l Vers. 12.

Object. 4.

Fourthly, the Spirit of God (say they) moves every man to any good worke that is done; and therefore men need not a particular commandement for every worke: for those that are carried by the Spirit, cannot but doe well. *Ans.* True it is, the Spirit moveth men to good workes freely, but yet this motion of the Spirit, is in and by the Word of God: and at this day, those instincts which are besides the Word, are mens owne fancies, or illusions of the devill. Many other reasons they alleage to this purpose, for the justifying their vowes of chastitie, of regular obedience, pilgrimages, trentalls, and such like, but they are like to these, and notwithstanding them all, the truth is this: that for substance, a good worke is such a one, as is ordained, appointed, and commanded by God. And here by the way, we may observe, that they are farre deceived, who so much commend the times of Popery for good workes: for the truth is, that all their oblations to Images, to Monasteries, and to Churches, for Masses, Pardons, and such like, were no good workes, but onely in their owne opinion; for God commanded them not: Now it is the Lords revealed will, that must give the goodnesse to mans worke: Mich. 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee.*

Next I adde: *Done of a regenerate person.* The Author of a good worke, is not every one in the world, but that man or woman that is a member of Christ, borne anew by the holy Ghost: so Christ here saith, *Let your light, &c.* restraining his speech to the persons of his Disciples. True it is that among Turkes and Infidels, many a civill man will doe workes of mercy, of civill justice, and liberalitie, and will abstaine from outward sinnes, and live orderly; now these, and such like, though in themselves they be good workes, so farre forth as they are required by the law of Nature, or commanded by Gods Word; yet in an Infidel, or an unregenerate person, they are sinnes: for first, they proceed from an heart which is corrupt with original sinne, and with unbeleefe; (for the [m] *heart* is the fountaine of all actions) and also they are practised by the members of the bodie, which are weapons of unrighteousnesse; and therefore must needs bee like unto water springing from a corrupt fountaine, and running through a filthy channell. Secondly, these workes are not done for Gods glory, and the good of men. Thirdly, they are not done in obedience to God, according to the Rule of goodnesse, the will and Word of God, and therefore cannot bee good workes. And this must teach every one that would do good, to labour for regeneration by the holy Ghost, that so his person may bee good, and then shall his workes of obedience be good in Gods sight: for such as the tree is, such will bee the fruit: *An evill tree cannot bring forth good fruit, nor a good, evill fruit*, Matth. 7. 18. Wee must therefore labour to bee ingrafted into Christ, for without him, we can doe no good thing: but being partakers of his grace, wee shall *abound with the fruits of righteousnesse, which are by Iesus Christ, unto the praise and glory of God*, Phil. 1. 11.

m Matth. 12. 35.

Thirdly, I adde: that *Good workes must bee done in faith*: for faith is the cause of every good worke, and without faith it is impossible to doe any good worke. Now, in the doing of a good worke, there is a twofold faith required: First, *a generall faith*, whereby a man is perswaded that God requires of him, the doing of that worke which he takes in hand: as when a man giveth almes, hee must be perswaded it is Gods will he should give almes; and so for other good workes: for [n] *Whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne*: that is, whatsoever proceedeth not from this perswasion in the conscience, that it is Gods will that such a thing should bee done, or should not bee done, is sinne: for hee that doubteth of the thing hee doth, sinneth therein, though the thing done bee good in it selfe. Secondly, herein is required *Justifying faith*, whereby a man is perswaded in his conscience, of his owne reconciliation with God in Christ: of this it is said, Heb. 11. 6. *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* This justifying faith hath a double use in the causing of a good worke: First, it gives the beginning to a good worke;

n Rom. 14. 23.

worke; for by juſtifying faith, Chriſt with his merits is apprehended, and applied to the perſon of the worker, and hee thereby is united to Chriſt, who renueth the minde, will, and affections of the worker, from whence the worke proceedeth: and ſo it is as pure water, comming from a cleanſed fountaine. Secondly, faith covereth the wants that be in good workes, (for the beſt worke done by man in this life, hath it wants:) now faith apprehendeth Chriſt and his merits, and applyeth the ſame unto the worker, whereby his perſon is accepted, and the imperfection of his worke covered in the ſight of God; and this muſt provoke us to labour for faith.

Laſtly, I adde; the end of a good worke; namely, *Gods glory in mans good.* The honour of God, muſt be the principall end of every good worke: now Gods honour ſtands in reverence, obedience, and thankfulneſſe; ſo that when we doe any good worke, we muſt doe it in reverence unto God, in obedience unto his Commandements, and in token of our thankfulneſſe unto him for his manifold mercies. The good of man muſt herein alſo be reſpected; the Apoſtle ſaith, *o The Law is fulfilled in one word, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelfe*: how can this be, ſeeing to love the Lord our God is the great commandement of the Law? It muſt therefore thus be underſtood; that the Law of God muſt be practiſed in the love of our neighbour, and not apart by it ſelfe. Againe, the end of a mans life, and of all his actions, is to ſerve God, in ſerving of man, and by ſerving of man, to ſerve God; as when we pray (which is a good worke) we muſt not onely reſpect our ſelves but pray for others; as for the Church of God, and for our brethren, as well as for our ſelves: yea, and for our enemies. So wee muſt heare the Word, and receive the Sacraments, that thereby wee may be better able to further our brethren in the way of ſalvation: this our Saviour doth here expreſſe, ſaying, [*That they may ſee your good works, And glorifie your Father in heaven:*] as if he ſhould ſay, Glorifie you God, and alſo cauſe others to doe the ſame.

Gal. 5. 14.

Vide alib.

First, here we may ſee what to judge of the works done by Papiſts: It is commonly thought that they abound with good workes, but it is not ſo; their beſt works are ſinnes before God, for they faile principally in the maine end of well-doing, which is to glorifie God, in the good of men: for a Papiſt doing a good worke, according to the Rules of their religion, doth it to *ſatiſfie* Gods juſtice, for the temporall puniſhment of his ſinnes, and to *merit* Heaven by it; and ſo erreth quite from the right end of a good worke, reſpecting therein his owne good, and nothing at all the good of others.

Bellar. inſtitutio. tom 1. lib. 6. cap. 21.

Secondly, hereby we may ſee for our ſelves, how farre we come ſhort in our good workes, for commonly we faile in the maine end thereof: men ſpend their daies and ſtrength in labour and toile, but all is for themſelves, for their owne pleaſure, their owne profit and preferment, without reſpect to the good of their brethren: now all ſuch actions wherein men ſeeke themſelves onely, and not Gods glory in the good of others, bee ſinfull in the doer, though otherwiſe good in themſelves. And therefore we muſt learne, in all our actions to aime at the glory of God in the good of men.

A

II. Point. Thus we ſee what a good worke is: now follow the differences of good workes. Good works be of two ſorts; First, thoſe which God in his Word hath directly commanded, as parts of his worſhip; ſuch are Prayer, Thankſgiving, receiving the Sacraments, hearing the Word, and releeving the poore; and theſe are the more principall kinds of good workes. The ſecond ſort are actions indifferent, ſanctified by the Word and Praier, and done to Gods glorie; as to eat, to drinke, and ſuch like; for howſoever in themſelves they bee neither good nor evill, being things neither commanded nor forbidden; and therefore in reſpect of the things themſelves, may with good conſcience bee either uſed, or refuſed: yet becauſe God hath commanded the manner how they muſt bee uſed; namely, by being ſanctified by the Word of God, and Prayer; and the end thereof, to wit, Gods glory; therefore when they are ſo uſed, they become good workes.

Two ſorts of good workes. I

B

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1 Tim. 4. 5.

Upon this difference of good works, obſerve the largeneſſe thereof, how farre they extend. There bee three eſtates ordained of God: the Church, the Common-wealth, and the Family; and for the preſervation of them, there be ſundry callings required; ſome whereof are preſcribed of God, and others left to be appointed by men; as all trades, and ſuch like: now not onely the callings appointed by God, and the duties thereof are good works; but even all inferiour callings appointed by men, for the good of theſe three eſtates; and the duties thereof, be they never ſo baſe, if they be ſanctified by prayer, and done to Gods glory, are good workes. *Example.* A man is called to bee a ſhepherd, and doth willingly accept thereof; now, though the calling be but baſe & meane, yet the works thereof being done in obedience to God, for the good of his maſter, are good workes; yea, as good in their kinde, as the beſt workes of the higheſt callings: and the ſame may bee ſaid of all lawfull callings, and the works thereof, bee they never ſo baſe: for God judgeth not the goodneſſe of the worke, by the excellencie of the matter whereabout it is occupied, but by the heart of the doer. This point muſt be learned, for the Papiſts conceit doth ſticke faſt in mens hearts, That there are no good works, but the building of Churches, and Hoſpitals, the mending of high waies, giving of large alms, &c. but we muſt learne, that every action of a mans lawfull calling, done in obedience to God, for the good of men, is a good worke before God: and therefore we muſt ſo walke every one of us in our callings, that the duties thereof may be acceptable to God. Againe, this will

C

D

will hence follow, that in theſe our dayes, wee may as well abound in ſuch workes as be good indeed, as the Papiſts did in their ſuperſtitious. Thus much of the difference of good workes.

III. Point. Now more particularly, in the text are further ſet downe three points touching good workes: the *Neceſſitie*, the *Dignitie*, and the *Vſe* of good workes. The *neceſſitie* of them appeareth by Chriſts commanding of them, ſaying, *Let your light ſo ſhine, &c.* for hereby hee bindeth all Chriſtians, after the examples of his Diſciples, to walke in good works. If it be ſaid: that Chriſt hath freed us from the law, and therefore we are not bound to doe good works. I anſwer, Chriſt hath freed us from the Law in regard of the cauſe and rigour thereof; but not as it is a rule of Chriſtian obedience.

Neceſſitie of good works. I

Queſt. How farre forth are good workes neceſſarie to ſalvation, or to us that doe them? *Anſw.* There be three opinions touching the neceſſitie of good workes: First, of the Papiſts, who hold them neceſſarie, as cauſes of our ſalvation and juſtification; but this we have confuted heretofore. Secondly, of ſome Proteſtants, who hold them neceſſarie, though not as principall cauſes, (for they ſay, we are onely juſtified and ſaved by Chriſt) yet as conſervant cauſes of our ſalvation: but the truth is, they are no cauſes of ſalvation, neither efficient, principall, nor conſervant; nor yet materiall, formall, or finall, as hath elſewhere beene ſhewed. The third opinion is the truth, that good workes are neceſſarie, not as cauſes of ſalvation, or juſtification; but as inſeparable conſequents of ſaving faith in Chriſt, whereby we are juſtified and ſaved; or as a way is neceſſarie to the going to a place. The *dignitie* of good workes is expreſſed in this, that they are called *good*: now they are *good* onely in part, not perfectly, as I ſhew thus: Such as the tree is, ſuch is the fruit; but every one regenerate is *partly ſpirit*, and *partly fleſh*; that is, in part regenerate, and in part naturall and corrupt: this is true of his minde, will, and affections, which are the fountaine of all his actions; and therefore the workes that proceed thence muſt needs bee anſwerable; that is, in part corrupt, as they come from nature; and yet good in part, as they come from grace.

Bellar. de Juſtif. lib. 4. c. 5. 7.

A

B

2 The dignitie of good workes.

Queſt. But how can God approve of them, if they be evill? *Anſ.* We muſt conſider good workes two wayes: First, in themſelves, as they are compared with the Law, and the rigour thereof, and ſo they are ſinnes, becauſe they anſwer not to that perfection, which the Law requireth: for there be two degrees of ſinnes; *Rebellions*, which are actions flatly againſt the Law: and *Defects*, when a man doth thoſe things that the Law commandeth, but yet faileth in the manner of doing, and ſo are mans very beſt workes ſinnes. Secondly, conſider good workes, as done by a perſon regenerate, and reconciled to God in Chriſt, and ſo God accepts of them; for in Chriſt the wants thereof are covered. But here we muſt take heed of the Romiſh doctrine, which teacheth that good workes are ſo farre forth good, that there is no ſinne in them; their reaſons are many to prove this point, but they have beene heretofore confuted: First, they ſay, good workes have God for their Author, and therefore are perfectly good. *Anſ.* This were true, if he alone were the author of them; but man is an other author thereof, from whom they take their imperfection. They ſay againe, that here they are called good, but if they had any ſinne in them, they ſhould be called evill, for every ſin is perfectly evill. *Anſ.* Where ſinne is unremitted, it is perfectly evill; but when it is pardoned in our Saviour Chriſt, it is as though it were not. Thirdly, they object, that if good workes bee ſinfull, then they muſt not be done; and hereupon they ſay, that by our doctrine men are bound to abſtaine from all good workes. *Anſ.* That which is evill muſt not be done, ſo farre forth as it is evill: now good workes are not ſimply and abſolutely evill; they are good in themſelves, and in us in part, comming from grace: and therefore they muſt be done, becauſe God requires them at our hands: and for the imperfection of them, we muſt pray for pardon to our Saviour Chriſt. And here by the way we may juſtly tax the proud doctrine of the Papiſts, who teach, that man may be juſtified by good workes: when as the beſt workes of any man in this life, are tainted with ſinne, and are farre unanſwerable to that perfection, which the Law requireth: we muſt be of a farre other minde namely, that for our beſt workes; God may juſtly condemne us; becauſe we have not done them as we ought: therefore Chriſt bids us ſay of our ſelves, that *When we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable ſervants.*

R. Hoc. ad fideli. p. 1. c. 5. 18.

C

Iſa. 64. 6.

The *uſe of good workes* is here ſet downe by our Saviour Chriſt, to *glorifie God*: this is not the whole end of good workes; and therefore I will propound the ſame more fully, out of other places of Scripture: for Chriſt here onely propoundeth that end of good workes, which concerned his intended purpoſe.

The uſe of good workes.

D

The uſe and end of good workes is three-fold, either concerning God, or our ſelves, or our brethren. As good workes concerne God, they have three uſes: First, they ſerve as meanes whereby we give unto God teſtimonie of our homage, and obedience unto his Commandements; for by creation, preſervation, & redemption, he is our Lord and our God, and ſo preſcribeth lawes for us to keepe: in which regard we owe homage unto him; which, that we may ſhew forth and teſtifie, we muſt walke in good workes, as he in his word hath commanded us. Secondly, they ſerve to be tokens of our thankfulneſſe unto God, for our creation, redemption, and manifold preſervations, both in ſoule and bodie. Thankefulneſſe indeed, is ſhewed in word; but yet true thankfulneſſe ſtands in obe-

Three-fold. 1 Concerning God. I

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dience:

dience: and our obedience is shewed by doing good workes. And therefore the Apostle *Paul* exhorts us, *To give up our bodies, as holy and acceptable sacrifices unto God*, Rom. 12. 1.

3 Thirdly, they serve to make us followers of God: we are commanded *to be holy, as he is holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. and to put in practice the duties of love one towards another, [f] *as the Lord loved us*: and therefore we must walke in the duties of the Morall law, that therein we may imitate God: 1 Joh. 3. 3. *He which hath this hope purgeth himselfe, as he is pure.*

[f] Eph. 5. 1, 2.

[a] Concerning our Christ.

1 Secondly, the use of good workes in regard of our selves, is fourefold especially: First, they serve to be outward testimonies of the truth of our faith and profession; proving that the grace of our hearts is not in hypocrisie, but in truth and sincerite. And for this cause, [g] *Abraham is said to have beene justified by workes*; because his works did testifie that his faith was true and sincere: for where the fire of grace is, there it cannot but burne; and where the water of life is, it cannot but flow and send out the streames thereof in good workes.

[g] Iam. 2. 21.

2 Secondly, they serve to be signes and pledges of our election, justification, sanctification, and of our future glorification: as we know a tree to live, by the fruit and bud which it bringeth forth; so by keeping a continuall course in good workes, a man is knowne to be in Christ, and to have true title to all his benefits: and therefore when the Apostle willeth men, to [a] *give all diligence to make their calling and election sure*, he propoundeth certaine vertues, wherein they ought to walke, as being the most evident tokens of election, that we have in this life.

[a] 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.

3 Thirdly, they serve to make us answerable to our holy calling: for every one that professeth the Gospel, is called to be a member of Christ, and a new creature, whose duty is to bring forth good workes: Eph. 4. 1, 2. *Walke worthy of the vocation wherewito you are called, with all humblenesse of minde, meeknesse, &c.* and Eph. 2. 10. *We are the workemanship of God, created in Christ Iesus, unto good workes, which God hath ordained that wee should walke in them.* Now this is a most excellent thing for a man to bee answerable to his calling: When *David* was a shepherd, he kept his fathers sheepe, and lived as a shepherd; but when he was called to be a King, *he behaved himselfe like a King*, [a] *in governing Gods people*: and so every Christian ought to doe; being a new creature, he must walke as Gods childe, and testifie his vocation by shewing forth the vertues of him that hath called him, 1 Pet. 2. 9.

[a] Psal. 78. 72.

4 Fourthly, good works serve to be a way, in which we are to walke, that so we may receive the mercies of God promised to his children, and escape the Judgements threatned against sinners: for Gods word is ful of most sweet promises unto the obedient, and of terrible threatnings against rebellion and iniquitie. Now a man by walking in good workes eschewes the paths of wickednesse, wherein [a] *Gods judgements light*: and holds the wayes of righteousnesse, wherein Gods blessings are scattered, Prov. 3. 17.

[a] Rom. 3. 16.

Thirdly, the end of good works, *in regard of our brethren*, is principally this; that by our example in well doing, wee may winne some unto God, and keepe others in the obedience of the truth, and prevent offences, whereby many are drawne backe. The contagion of a bad example, especially in men of superiour place, is such, that it will not onely cast their owne soules to hell, but also draw many with them. When *Ieroboam* the King sinned, *he caused Israel to sin*: 1 King. 15. 34. And therefore we must carefully looke to all our waies, in regard of others, and so live according to Christs Commandement in this place, that others seeing our good workes, may be wonne to the truth, and so glorifie God which is in heaven. And thus we see the ends of good works.

[c] Concerning our brethren.

Now considering good workes bee of such excellent use, we are hereby admonished to exercise our selves therein with all diligence; for hereby we benefit our brethren, we helpe our selves, and we glorifie God: neither must any mans povertie hinder him from this dutie: for not onely almes deeds, and large gifts to Churches and high wayes, are good workes, but also the speciall duties of every mans lawfull calling, done in faith, to the glory of God, and the good of men, be the calling never so base: by the doing whereof, in faith and obedience, he may get sure testimony of his election. This exhortation is most needfull, for so soone as men have occasion to commit any sinne, then they shake off the yoke of all obedience, as there were no way of good workes to be walked in. The Papists indeed make the merit of justification, and life everlasting, the end of good works, but that hath bin sufficiently confuted hertofore.

Hitherto we have spoken of the first point in this conclusion, touching the *manner of teaching*.

The second point herein contained, is the end of all teaching; namely, to turne men unto God, and thereby to bring them to glorifie God. *That men may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven*: that is, so teach, that men may see your good workes, and be wonne thereby to the faith, and so glorifie God. Our Saviour Christ in his Commission given to his Disciples before his ascension, bids them, [y] *Goe, make all nations my Disciples*: and *Paul* saith, that [z] *He became all things to all men, that by all meanes he might* not onely instruct, *but save some.*

End of teaching.

[y] Mat. 28. 19.

[z] 1 Cor. 9. 22.

Hereby then all Ministers, and all those that set themselves apart for this calling, must learne to propound this duty unto themselves, as the maine end of all their studies and labours; namely, to turne men unto God, that being converted they may glorifie God. Againe, the same end of the Ministerie admonisheth all

the same end of the Ministerie admonisheth all hearers so to yeeld themselves obedient to the Ministerie of the Word, that it may take place in their hearts, to turne them unto God, that after their conversion they may glorifie God. This the people ought the rather to yeeld unto, because it is the maine comfort that the Minister hath of all his labours, to see his hearers converted, and so inabled to glorifie God. And to move them hereunto, they are further to know, that if they heare, and be not thereby converted, that so they may praise and glorifie God, by their obedience; then this Ministerie will be a Bill of Inditement against them, for their deeper condemnation at the last day. See Matthew 11. 21, 24.

verse 17 *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy them, but to fulfill them.*

The third part of Christs Sermon.

In this verse, and the rest which follow, to the end of this Chapter, is contained the *Third part of Christs Sermon*; wherein he goes about to restore the Morall Law to his true sense and meaning, which was much corrupted by the Jewish teachers. And to the end the same might be the better accepted, hee makes way thereto by a notable Preface, verse 17, 18, 19, 20. Wherein he seekes, as well to prevent and to remove the false opinion which the Jewes had conceived of him, in respect of the Law; as also to procure all reverence and loyaltie to bee shewed thereunto: For the Jewish teachers seeing our Saviour Christ condemne and neglect the traditions of the Elders, and not so much to respect the ceremonies of the Law, as they thought hee should, did thereupon judge him to bee a deceiver, and one that went about to overturne the whole Law of *Moses*. This opinion Christ confuteth by three arguments: First, from the end of his comming, in this verse: The second, from the nature of the Law, in the 18. verse; whereupon he inferres two notable conclusions, to procure reverence thereunto, verse 19. And thirdly, from the scope of his Ministerie, verse 20.

For the first: The Exposition. *Think not that I am come, &c.* | This comming of Christ, must be understood of the manifestation of the Godhead in our nature for otherwise, his Godhead being every where, cannot bee said to come properly: and as for his manhood, it had not beene in heaven. *To destroy the Law.* | The *Law* in generall, is that part of Gods Word, which commands things just, honest, and godly: and being thus conceived, it is threefold; Ceremoniall, Judiciall, and Morall. The *Ceremoniall law*, is that part of Gods Word, which prescribed to the Jewes, ceremonies, rites, and orders, to be performed in the worship of God: this law is laid downe in the bookes of *Moses*, especially in *Leviticus*. The *Judiciall law*, is that part of Gods Word, which prescribed ordinances for the government of the Jewes common-wealth, and the civill punishment of offenders. The *Ceremoniall law* concerned the Jewes onely: the *Judiciall law* did indeed principally concerne them; but yet, so farre forth as it tendeth to the establishing of the morall law, having in it common equitie, it concerneth all people in all times and places. What the *Morall law* is, I will describe in three points: First, it is that part of Gods Word concerning righteousnesse and godlinesse, which was written in *Adams* minde by the gift of creation; and the remnants of it be in every man by the light of nature: in regard whereof it bindes all men. Secondly, it commanderh perfect obedience, both inward in thought and affection; and outward in speech and action. Thirdly, it bindeth to the curse and punishment, every one that faileth in the least dutie thereof, though but once, and that in thought onely: Galat. 3. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the law, to doe them.* The summe of the Morall law is propounded in the *Decalogue*, or *ten Commandements*, which many can repeat, but few doe understand.

The Law in generall.

Ceremoniall.

Difference betweene the Law and the Gospel.

That we may further conceive aright the morall law, we must make a difference betweene it and the Gospell: for the Gospell is that part of the Word which promiseth righteousnesse and life everlasting to all that beleeve in Christ: the difference betweene them stands especially in five things:

1 First, the Law is naturall, and was in mans nature before the fall; but the Gospel is spirituall, revealed after the fall, in the covenant of grace.

2 Secondly, the Law sets forth Gods iustice in rigour, without mercie; but the Gospell sets out justice and mercie, united in Christ.

3 Thirdly, the Law requireth a perfect righteousnesse within us; but the Gospell revealeth our acceptance with God, by imputed righteousnesse.

4 Fourthly, the Law threatneth judgement without mercie, and therfore is called [a] *the ministerie of condemnation, and of death*: but the Gospell shewes mercie to mans sinne, in and by Christ, if we repent and beleeve.

[a] 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.

5 Lastly, the Law promisth life to the worker and doer of it; [b] *Doe this, and thou shalt live*: but the Gospell offereth salvation to him that *worketh not, [c] but beleeveth in him that justifieth the ungodly*: not considering faith, as a worke, but as an instrument apprehending Christ, by whom we are made righteous.

[b] Rom. 10. 5.

[c] Rom. 4. 5.

The Church of Rome in a manner confound the Law and the Gospell, saying that the Gospell, which is the new Law, revealeth Christ more clearely than *Moses* Law did, which they call the old Law. But this is a wicked opinion,

Trident. August. cap. 4. 5. 11. 12. 13. 14.

which overturnes all religion, being the cause of many grosse points in Poperie, which could not stand, if they would acknowledge a true distinction betweene the Law and the Gospel. They say for their defence, that the precepts of both are the same in substance; that both require righteousnes, both promise life, and threaten death; both command faith, repentance, and obedience; and therefore they are the same. *Answer.* First, the lawes and precepts of the Law and Gospel are not the same; for *Adam* in his innocencie knew the Law, but he knew nothing then of beleeving in Christ: and though both require righteousnesse, promise life, and threaten death, yet the manner is far different, as before was noted. So likewise they differ in the commanding of faith; for the Gospel commandeth faith, not as a worke done, as the Law doth; but as an instrument laying hold on Christ. Againe, the Law commands faith generally; as to beleeve in God, and to beleeve his Word to be true: but besides this, the Gospel requires a particular faith in Christ the Redeemer, whom the Law never knew. Thirdly, the Law commandeth not repentance, for the knowledge of the Law was in *Adams* heart, when he needed no repentance: true repentance therefore is a saving grace, wrought and commanded onely by the Gospel. And fourthly, for obedience, though it be commanded both by the Law and the Gospel; yet not in the same manner: The Law commandeth obedience every way perfect, both in parts and in degrees, and alloweth none other: but the Gospell commandeth, and in Christ approveth imperfect obedience; that is, an endeavour in all things, to obey and please God, if it be without hypocrisie. Againe, the Law commandeth obedience, as a worke to be done, for the obtaining of salvation: but the Gospel requires obedience, only to testifie our faith and thankfulnesse unto God. The Church of Rome therefore erreth grosly in confounding the Law and the Gospell, which indeed are far differing; and so we must beleeve, if we would come into, and hold the right way that leadeth unto life.

Now whereas Christ saith, *Thinke not that I came to destroy the Law*: by *Law* he meaneth principally the *Morall Law*, and in the second place, the *Ceremoniall Law* also. Next observe the opposition that Christ maketh betweene the Law and the Prophets; thereby signifying unto us, that by the *Law*, he meaneth that part of Gods Word, concerning Righteousnesse and Justice, which *Moses* penned by Gods Commandement: and by the *Prophets*, he meaneth that part of Gods Word, which is contained in the writings of all the Prophets in the old Testament, after *Moses*; which books of the Prophets contained in them either an interpretation of *Moses* Law, or predictions of the state of the Church in the new Testament. Against, by *destroying the Law*, we must not understand a breach of the Law, such as is made by mans sinne; but such a dissolution, as taketh from it all vertue and power, whereby it is a Law: and so to *destroy the Prophets*, is to put an end unto them, so as they should nothing availe, either to the interpretation of the Law, or to the sore-telling of the state of Gods Church under the Gospel. *But to fulfill them.* Christ fulfilleth the Law three wayes; by his *doctrine*, in his *person*, and in *men*. By his *doctrine* he fulfilleth the Law two wayes; both by restoring unto it his proper meaning and true use, as we shall see afterward, where hee correcteth the corrupt interpretations thereof by the Pharises; as also, by revealing the right way, whereby the Law may be fulfilled. Secondly, in his *person* he fulfilleth the Law two wayes: First, by becomming accursed to the Law, in suffering death upon the crosse for us. Secondly, by performing perfect obedience unto the Law, doing all that the Law required for the love of God, or of his neighbour; in which respect he was said, [d] *To have beene under the Law.* Thirdly, Christ fulfilled the Law in *men*: Men be of two sorts, Elect, and Reprobates. In the *Elect* he fulfilleth the Law two wayes: First, by creating faith in their hearts, whereby they lay hold on Christ, who for them fulfilled it: Secondly, by giving them his owne spirit, which maketh them endevour to fulfill the Law; which in Christ is accepted for perfect obedience in this life, and in the life to come is perfect indeed. In *unbelievers* Christ fulfilleth the Law, when he executeth the curse of the Law upon them; for that is a part of the Law, and the executionand enduring of the curse, is a fulfilling of the Law. And thus doth Christ fulfill the Law; so that the meaning of the words is this: Whereas you thinke that I came to destroy the Law and the Prophets, by making them of none effect, you are deceived; nay, on the other side, know that the end of my manifestation in the flesh, was to fulfill the Law, both in my doctrine and person; and also, in the persons of men both good and bad.

In this Apologie of Christ, for his behaviour towards the law; observe what malice some of the Jewes, especially the Scribes and Phariseis, bare unto him: for Christ was the Author of the Law, and yet they maliciously suspect, and charge him with the abrogation thereof: so as he is faine to cleare himselfe in this behalfe.

The like hath beene the malice of wicked men in all ages, against the dearest servants of God; Acts 6. 14. *Stephen* is accused to *speake blasphemous words against the Law*: Act. 21. 28. *Paul* is charged with the same crime. And such is the malice of the Papists, against all Evangelicall reformed Churches; because we denie Justification by workes, therefore they condemne us for enemies to good workes: and in many other points, they fasten upon us notes of reproach, for holding the truth. Yea, among our selves, the like malice doth appeare in those that

Matth. 5. vers. 17.

Christ fulfilleth the Law three wayes. 1

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d Gal. 4. 4.

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appeare in those that brand their bretheren with odious names, because they shew forth more care than others, of their duty to God: but let all Gods children beware of this Pharisaicall practice.

Vse 2.

Againe, observe the Titles, under which he comprehendeth the whole Scriptures of the old Testament; *The law and the Prophets*: Luke. 16. 31. they are called *Moses and the Prophets*. Luke 24. 27. *Christ began at Moses, and at all the Prophets, and interpreted unto them in all the Scriptures*: there *Moses* and the *Prophets* doe containe all the Scriptures of the old Testament.

A properie of the old Testament.

Here then wee may note a properie of the books of the old Testament; namely, that every one of them was either written by *Moses* or some other of the Prophets. And by this we may know the Canonicall books of the old Testament, and distinguish them from the bookes called Apocrypha: for the Apocrypha bookes were not penned by any of the Prophets, who spake and writ in the Hebrew tongue, the native Language of the Jewes; but by some other in the Greeke tongue, which was not the language of the old Prophets. These bookes may bee regarded in sundry respects, as containing many worthy Rules touching manners; in which regard, wee may preferre them before other writings of men, so farre forth as they are consonant with the Scripture; and so the Church of God hath of a long time reverenced them; but yet they are no part of the Law, nor of the Prophets. And therefore the Church of Rome doth notably wrong and abuse the world, in styling these Apocryphall Books, for Canonicall Scripture.

Concil. Trid. sess. 4. sect. 1.

Thirdly, Christ in this his Apologie, sheweth a sweet consent betweene the Law and the Gospell: They are not contrary one to the other; for Christ, who is the substance of the Gospell, came to fulfill the Law: and therefore *Paul* saith, that by [e] *faith we establish the Law*: and Hebrewes 9. 19, 20, &c. *When Moses had given the Law unto the people, offered sacrifices, and sprinkled the bloud thereof upon the Booke, and upon the people*, which was a type of the shedding of Christs bloud, as it is [f] there expounded; which did notably signifie this consent betweene the Law and the Gospell, insomuch, as without Christ, the Law could not stand.

Consent of the Law and Gospell.

e Rom. 3. 31.

f ver. 23, 24.

Now this consent betweene them standeth herein; The Law requireth perfect obedience, and threatneth death to the least breach thereof, not propounding any way for the fulfilling thereof out of our selves; but the Gospell directeth us to Christ, who as our sinetie hath fulfilled the Law for us; for which cause, Christ is called, [g] *The end for the Law for righteousnes, to every one that beleeveth*. And through Christ it is, that *the righteousnesse of the Law is fulfilled in us, which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirit.*

g Rom. 10. 8.

h Rom. 8. 4.

v. 18 *For truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth perish, one jot or one title of the Law shall not escape, till all things be fulfilled.*

Here our Saviour Christ propoundeth the second argument, for the clearing of himselfe from their false imputation of destroying the Law, and it is drawne from the nature of the Law, which is immutable.

The Exposition. *For*: This sheweth the dependance of this verse upon the former, *Truly I say unto you*: This is a forme of speech which our Saviour used, when he would solemnely avouch any weightie truth: and propounding this in his owne name, herein he sheweth himselfe to be the Doctor of his Church, whom we must heare in all things, for he speaketh as one that cannot lie. The thing he saith is this, *Till heaven ad earth perish, one jot or title of the Law shall not passe*. In which words he setteth downe the stability and the unchangeablenesse of the Law; and that he might fully expresse his minde, he borroweth a phrase from the Hebrew Alphabet, wherein *Iod* is the least letter: *One jot*; signifying, that not so much as this little letter *Iod*, shall passe out of the Law.

Againe, by *title* some thinke is meant the Hebrew vowels; but properly it signifieth *a line bent crooked*, or *the top of an horne*; so that here it properly signifieth the bending or bowing that is in the top of some Hebrew letters; insinuating, that not so much as the least part of a letter in the Law should passe away. Now these things must not be taken properly, for it hath beene and may be, that in the Hebrew copies of the old Testament some letters should be changed, as may appeare by the diverse reading in sundry copies; for that may be without the losse of any sentence: but Christs meaning is this; That not the least parcell or sentence in the Law shall passe away; making parts in the Law, to bee as titles in the Alphabet. *Till heaven and earth perish*: that is, *never*: so much this phrase insinuateth: for though heaven and earth shall be changed in regard of their qualities, yet the substance of them shall never passe to nothing: and in this sense is the Word *Till* used else-where, 1 Sam. 15. 35. *Samuel came no more to see Saul, till the day of his death*; that is, *never*. *Till all things be fulfilled*; that is, till every thing commanded in the Law be done, so as it shall no more urge a man to any obedience: which shall never bee, for it must eternally bee fulfilled: so that this phrase hath the like sense with the former, importing thus much, *even for ever and ever*: so that this is the meaning of this verse; That the Law of God is unchangeable, not onely in the

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whole, but for eyenie part thereof; and the fulfilling thereof shall never have an end. Christs reason then stands thus; *If the Law be immutable, and for observation eternall, then I came not to destroy it: but the Law is immutable and eternall; and therefore I came not to destroy it.*

The Law is perpetuall.

First, here observe, that the *Law of God is made perpetuall and unchangeable*: If any man aske how this can be, seeing the Apostle saith, [i] *The Law is changed? Answer.* The Law is threefold, *Ceremoniall, Iudiciall,* and *Morall,* as hath beene said: now that place is principally to be understood of the *Ceremoniall Law,* which indeed is abrogated, in regard of the observation of it in Gods worship; but in the scope and substance of it, which is Christ crucified, with his benefits, whom it shadowed out, it remaineth still, and is now more plaine than ever it was. As for the *Iudiciall law,* though it be abrogated unto us, so farre forth as it was peculiar to the Jewes; yet, as [k] it agrees with common equity, and serves directly to establish the precepts of the Morall Law, it is perpetuall. If it bee said, that Christ changed the Morall law, in changing the Sabbath day, from the seventh day to the eighth: I answer, Christ did so indeed by his Apostles, but that is no change of the substance, but of the ceremonie of the Sabbath: for the substance of that Law, is the injoyning of a seventh daies rest unto the Lord. Now though the seventh day from the creation be not kept, yet a seventh day is kept still. If it be further said, that the Law itselfe is abrogated; for that every one that breaketh the Law is not accused, according to the sentence thereof, Deut. 27. 26. *Answer.* We must know, that the Law is but one part of Gods Word, and the Gospell another, revealing another part of Gods will, besides that which the Law made knowne; for it addes a qualification to the Law, moderating the rigour thereof, after this manner; *He is accursed* (saith the Law) *that faileth in any commandement, except* (saith the Gospel) *he be reconciled againe in Christ, and in him have the pardon of his transgressions.* And yet the Morall law remaines for ever a rule of obedience to everie childe of God, though he bee not bound to bring the same obedience for his justification before God.

[i] Heb. 7. 12.

[k] Lex Israelis of Cartwright, cap. 2. fol. 5

The change of the Sabbath day.

Again, this propertie of the Law, in being unchangeable, and for ever to be kept, sheweth *that no creature may dispense with the Law of God.* Mens lawes may be abrogated and changed, but Gods law even in the least parts thereof, must stand for ever, till it be accomplished to the full: but if it might be dispensed with, then not *jots* and *titles* thereof, but whole lawes might be abrogated. This shewes the blasphemous impietie of the Popes of Rome, who in their [l] Canons be authorized to dispense with the lawes of God: yea, in the last [m] Councell of Trent, hee is privileged to dispense with some of the lawes of Consanguinitie, against nature, flatly forbidden in the [n] Word of God; which is most horrible rebellion, and a great disgrace unto God.

No creature may dispense with the Law.

[l] Ex In Gregorian. de concell. prab. Lib. 3. Popolaitt. Lib. 1. Papa dispe. [m] Vel contra mandata & vetus Testam. [n] Leviticus 18. 24. Prov. 3.

Thirdly, from the propertie of the Law, we may observe, that it is not likely that any whole booke of Canonicall Scripture is lost; for not one sentence of the Law shall passe till all bee fulfilled; much lesse then can whole books perish. Sundry men doe thinke that whole books be lost; but that opinion cals into question the fidelitie of the Church, and Gods owne providence, in preserving his Word: neither can it stand well with this text, that saith *no title thereof shall faile.* Those that seeme to be lost, were either humane writings, as books of lawes and Chronicles, such as our books of statutes or Chronicles be, or books of Philosophie, such as *Salomon* writ: or else some of them are in the Canonicall Scripture; for the books of *Samuel* and the *Kings* were written by divers Prophets: and therefore we may more safely hold, that no part of holy Scripture is lost, neither shall ever faile. For howsoever after the last judgement the use of the Word written shall cease, yet the substance thereof shall remaine in mens hearts, and be kept for ever.

No booke of Scripture is lost.

Fourthly, this immutability of the Law, containes a matter of great terrour and woe unto all impenitent sinners; for howsoever they may flatter themselves with a presumption of Gods mercie, yet the curse of the Law which is against them, shall stand for ever: and therefore while they goe on in sin, they have just cause to howle and crie, for Gods justice in that his Law is inviolable: neither will [o] *gold or silver pacifie Gods wrath:* for though a man by his power and wealth were able to overturne heaven and earth, yet that would not helpe him: though heaven and earth be brought to nothing, yet every part of Gods Law must stand for ever, and be fulfilled. And therefore whosoever doe lie in any sin, must in time repent, humble themselves, forsake their sinnes, and betake themselves unto Christ, that he may fulfill the Law for them; or else the curse thereof shall certainly be fulfilled in them, and they shall lie howling under it eternally, where is nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth.

A terrour to the wicked moving to repentance.

[o] Prov. 11. 4.

Fifthly, this immutability of the Law, and so proportionably of every part of Gods Word, as it proveth the Scriptures to be the Word of God, so it is a most excellent ground of comfort for all Gods servants to stablish their hearts in the assurance of all his promises. A Christian heart is subject to receive many doubtings of the truth of Gods promises, especially in the time of triall and temptation: but this must be remembred for ever, that the whole Word of God is immutable; though mans promises may faile and their wayes bee abrogated, yet no jot or part of Gods Word shall passe unfulfilled: and therefore they must constantly wait for the accomplishment thereof, for in due time it shall be fulfilled.

A comfort to the godly.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, we are hereby taught to put on patience in afflictions: for they come by the speciall appointment of our God, who saith in his Word, [p] *That through many afflictions we must enter into the kingdome of heaven:* now every part of Gods Word must be accomplished; and therefore Christ bade *Peter to put up his sword,* when he would have rescued his apprehension: for (saith he) *I could pray to my Father, and he would send more than twelve legions of Angels to helpe me: but how should the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say, It must so be?* Matth. 26. 52, 53, 54.

A ground of patience.

[p] Act. 14. 22.

Seventhly, our Saviour Christ in this propertie of immutabilitie, giveth unto the whole Law, and unto every syllable and letter thereof, his proper force, vertue, and sense; so as there is nothing in it, not so much as one letter vaine or idle: for every commandement reveales the perfect justice of God, and every letter serves to expresse the same Commandement. And herein the Law of God differeth from mens lawes: for in them be many vaine and idle words, yea, oftentimes whole sentences; but in the Law of God it is not so: Prov. 8. 8. *All the words of my mouth are righteous, there is no lewdnesse nor frowardnesse in them:* yea, *the Law of the Lord* [q] *is perfect, his statutes are right, and his judgements true and righteous altogether.* Now the consideration of this integritie and perfection of the law, and Word of God, must move us to study the Scriptures with great diligence: so saith our Saviour Christ, [r] *Search the Scriptures:* that is, shake and sift them, (as the word signifieth) search narrowly, till the true force and meaning of every sentence, yea, of every word and syllable; nay, of every letter and jot therein, be knowne and understood: conferre place with place, the scope of one place with another, things going before with things that come after; yea, compare word with word, letter with letter, and search it thorowly. This manner of studying the Scripture is most necessarie, as being the thing indeed which preserveth and upholdeth the Church of God, and the puritie of religion: for about foure or five hundred yeares agone, men left off to study the Bible, after this sort, and betooke themselves to the writings of men, occupying their wits wholly in vaine quiddities in Philosophie, and in hid mysteries of Divinitie: by which meanes it came to passe, that Poperie and Apostacie from the truth, spread it selfe over the world, for many hundred yeares together. Afterward, God of his meere mercie, put into the hearts of some men, to be carefull searchers in the Word of God, by which meanes the truth appeared, as light out of darknesse. Thus God stirred up *Luther,* about the yeare of our Lord, 1517. who by diligent search in the Scripture, and especially by serious meditation, with prayer, upon these words of the Apostle, Rom. 3. 21. *That now by the Gospell, without the Law, the Justice of God is made manifest:* did finde that by the perfect obedience of Christ, our justification was wrought; and thereupon began to maintaine and professe Justification before God to bee free, through and by faith in Christ onely, without helpe from the workes of the Law, against the Doctrine of the Church of Rome: and so by further diligence and industrie in the Scripture, the truth of God shone forth more and more. Let all men, but especially students in Divinitie, consider this effect, of searching out the Scripture, as a spurre to diligence, in this behalfe. By this meanes also errours and heresies are avoided and suppressed, and the will of God is plainely revealed. And here by the way, we may see how profitable and necessarie the gift of interpretation is; it is a most excellent gift of the spirit, pertaining to the ministerie; and therefore most commendable and necessarie is the vse thereof in Schooles of Learning.

The integritie of the Law.

[q] Psal. 19. 7, 8.

Diligent studie of the Scripture.

[r] Joh. 5. 39.

The meanes of Luthers conversion.

Eighthly, this immutability ascribed to Gods Law, that every part thereof shall be accomplished to the full, teacheth all Princes and Magistrates, not onely to bee keepers of *Moses* law in their owne persons; but also within their rule and dominions, to doe their best endevour, that the same bee fulfilled and kept by others. For this cause did the Lord command, that the *Prince of his people should have the Law* [s] *written before him in a booke, to read upon continually, that he may learn to feare God, and to keepe all the words of the Law to doe them:* and that which is there injoyned unto Princes, belongeth also unto all Magistrates, Masters and Parents, within their places and charges; they must be carefull to see the whole Law of God practised, and obeyed, both in their owne persons, and of those that are under them.

Magistrates must be keepers of the Law.

[s] Deut. 17. 18, 19.

Lastly, by this immutabilitie ascribed to the Law, we may learne, what is to fulfill the Law; namely, to keepe and observe to the full, every particular thing which the Law commands us: and upon this we may ground two conclusions against the Papists: First, that no man can come to life everlasting by his owne righteousnesse and obedience; for he that would come to heaven by his owne righteousnesse, must be able to fulfill the whole Law perfectly in every respect: but since *Adams* fall no man could keepe the Law in all things, saving our Saviour Christ, both God and man. Secondly, that our fulfilling of the Law, must be in the obedience of Christ, for he onely was answerable to the whole law in all things; and therefore if wee would come to heaven, wee must not come in our owne righteousnesse, but in his; as *Paul* wisheth to be found of God, Phil. 3. 8, 9.

What it is to keepe the law.

v. 19 *Whosoever therefore shall breake one of these least com-*

Commandements, and teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdome of heaven: but whosoever shall observe and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdome of heaven.

Our Saviour Christ having plainely propounded in his Apologie for himselfe, the stabilitie and eternitie of the whole Law; doth here lay downe two notable conclusions, for the upholding thereof: 1. *Because the Law is immutable and eternall, therefore hee that breaketh one of the least of the Commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the kingdome of heaven.* 2. *Because the Law is eternall, therefore he that keepes the Commandements, and teacheth men so, shall be called great in the kingdome of heaven.*

For the first; by *least Commandement*, he meaneth the precepts of the Morall law, though in the former verse, [by Law] he understood the whole law in three parts; Judiciall, Morall, and Ceremoniall. And he calleth them *little*, not simply in regard of themselves, as though they were so indeed; for in it selfe every Commandement of God is great and weightie, but he speaketh according to the opinion of the Jewes, for the Scribes and Pharises had ordained certaine rites and ceremonies, according to the tradition of their Fathers; the observation whereof, they made a greater matter of conscience, than the keeping of some of Gods Commandements: and so esteemed them little. Againe, saying *these least commandements*, he appointeth out what particular commandements of the Morall Law, the Jewes esteemed lesse than the traditions of men; namely, those which afterward he expoundeth in this Chapter, touching *Murther, Adulterie, Swearing*, and the rest: for they esteemed not all the commandements of the Law lesser than their traditions. *Shall be called least in the kingdome of heaven:*] Here Christ sets downe the punishment of a false Prophet, which breakes Gods commandements and teach men so; to wit, his base esteeme in the Church of God: for the kingdome of God is twofold, the kingdome of grace, and the kingdome of glorie. The kingdome of grace is the societie and companie of Gods faithfull servants here on earth: The kingdome of glorie is the blessed estate of all the Saints in heaven. Now here by the kingdome of heaven he meaneth the kingdome of grace, which is the militant Church on earth: and so *Iohn Baptist* calleth it, Matth. 3. 2. *Repent and amend, for the kingdome of heaven is at hand:* that is, the Church of the old Testament is now abolished, and the Church of the new Testament is readie to take place by Christs comming; and therefore repent and amend: and Matth. 11. 12. *From the time of Iohn hitherto, the kingdome of heaven suffereth violence.* So then the meaning of this first conclusion is this, Whosoever breaketh one of these least commandements of the Morall Law (which afterward I shall expound) and teacheth men so to doe, he shall be contemned, and not counted worthy to be a member of the Church of God in the new Testament.

Shew some Commandements are little.

Punishment of a false Prophet.

Matth. 5. ver. 19.

The meaning.

In this *conclusion*, in the practice of the Jewes, Christ setteth forth two notable corruptions of an hollow heart towards God: The first, to set little by the commandements of God, esteeming no more of them, nay lesse, than of mens lawes and traditions: but Saint *James*[1] saith, *He that breaketh one commandement*, be it never so little, *is guiltie of all*, though he make shew of keeping all: so likewise he that maketh light and base account of one Commandement, contemneth all; though he seeme to honour the rest never so much. Though *Herod* heard *Iohn* gladly, and obeyed his doctrine in many things, and so seemed to make some account of some commandements; yet because he would needs live in incest, against the seventh commandement, he did in effect contemne and breake them all: so at this day, there are many who professe religion, and give testimonie thereof, by hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments; and hereupon they would be counted lovers of Gods law: yet in the course of their lives, and in their particular callings, they will not sticke to oppresse the poore, and to deale unjustly for their advantage; to prophane the Sabbath for a little profit or pleasure, and to sweare, and curse, when they are a little provoked. Now howsoever such persons may make a glorious shew of profession outwardly, yet by these and such like particular actions, they shew plainely that they have but Pharisaicall hearts, which indeed make little or no account of Gods commandements. Let us therefore every one looke into our wayes, and search in our hearts, whether this corruption be in us, or no: and if it be, let us repent and forsake it, and labour to become like [u] *David, who had respect unto all Gods commandements*: and so shall we not be despised in the Church of God.

The corruptions of hypocrites respecting Gods Word.

[1] Iam. 2. 10.

[u] Psal. 119. 6.

The second corruption of an hollow heart, noted likewise of Christ, in these Jewes is, to place the ceremonies, rites, and traditions of men, above the Commandements of the Morall law: Herewith he doth expressely charge the Jewish teachers, Matth. 15. 3. *Why doe ye transgresse the commandements of God, by your traditions?* And this is also the practice of the Church of Rome at this day, they account [x] *eating of flesh in Lent, and on their fasting daies, a deadly sinne*: and yet they will [y] dispense with treasons and murthers of Christian Princes: they [z] allow of Stues, they permit and pardon Sodomie;

a Corruption.

[x] Tolet. Summa. casu. co. l. 16. cap. 3

[y] Lib. de justa abdicat. Henr.

[z] Pope Sixtus 4.

Sodomie; and yet [a] utterly forbid marriage in some estate, which the holy Ghost [b] *calleth honourable among all men.* In these and many moe, they preferre their owne traditions before the most holy Commandements of God: yea, many ignorant persons among us, are tainted with this corruption: for bee not some festdayes appointed by the Church, as Christs nativitie, all Saints, and such like, observed by them with greater conscience and reverence, than the Lords owne Sabbath? Though the memorie of Christs nativitie may be celebrated; yet the Lords day should have the speciall honour. Now for the reforming of this corruption, we must labour to have the same minde that was in *David*, who grew into admiration with Gods Commandements, and thereupon inured himselfe to the observation of them. We must therefore labour to have an high estimation of the Lawes of God, and this will be a notable meanes, to draw us to a reverend feare and obedience towards the same: one cause why men doe not so highly advance the Law of God, as they ought, is because they doe not sufficiently weigh the dignitie thereof. In every Commandement therefore, we must first deeply consider the weight thereof; then labour to understand it aright: thirdly, learne to admire the wisdome and justice of God therein: and lastly, endeavour to yeeld loyaltie and obedience thereunto.

[a] Calist 1. apud grat. dist. 27. Can. Presbyter. Rhem. 1. Tim. 3. sect. 1.

[b] Heb. 13. 4.

Psal. 119.

A ground of obedience.

Secondly, in this Rule our Saviour Christ puts a difference betweene a false Prophet, and a true: The false Prophet breakes the commandements of God in his owne person, and also by his doctrine teacheth others to doe the like: But the true Prophet and servant of God, in the Ministerie, endevoureth the advancement of Gods glorie, as well by integritie of life, as by soundnesse of doctrine.

Difference between a false prophet and a true.

Thirdly, in the punishment of a false Prophet here set downe, we have good direction for our judgement, touching the present Church of Rome; namely, that she is not worthy to be esteemed a part of Christs Church on earth, by the sentence of our Saviour Christ; because she *breakes Gods Commandements, and teacheth men so*: for whereas the second Commandement forbidden the worshipping of Images, yea, and the making of Images to resemble God; the Church of Rome doth not onely allow the contrarie, against this Commandement; but teacheth others so to doe: saying, that it is lawfull [a] to resemble the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost in Images, either painted or carved, and to worship them therein; yea, and to worship [b] the very Images of Christ, and of Saints, as also the [c] Saints themselves, with religious worship.

Romes sin part of Christs Church: and why.

Againe, they plainely breake the tenth commandement, which forbiddeth the first motions unto sinne with delight, though without consent of will, by teaching [d] that concupiscence after Baptisme is no sinne. And as they deale with the Commandements, so deale they with the Prophets, who give testimonie unto Christ: for first, they destroy his manhood, by their forged transubstantiation: secondly, they overturne his kingly office, by making the Pope the [e] *head of the Church*, and giving him power [f] *to make lawes to binde the conscience.* Thirdly, they overturne the *priesthood*, by their massing Priesthood, wherein [g] *they daily offer up an unbloudie sacrifice*, for the sinnes of the quicke and dead. Fourthly, they rob him of his propheticall office; in giving libertie to the [h] Pope, to make new lawes, and [i] to expound the Scriptures, as supreme Judge: these things they teach, and therefore that Church is not worthy to bee counted a member of Christs Church. But seeing God in great mercie hath vouchsafed us this favour, in this land that we should receive and embrace his holy Word, to publish and teach the same; and so esteemeth us worthy to bee accounted a member of his Church: we are therefore to rejoyce in this mercie, and to praise God unfainedly for this unspeakeable blessing; and to shew forth our thankfulnesse, not onely by teaching and receiving the truth of his Word, but also by yeelding obedience in all things thereunto: yea, our earnest and daily prayer must be, because it is so great a blessing, to be counted worthy of his kingdome, that God would continue the truth of his will to us, and to our posteritie for ever.

[a] Sanders treatise of the worship of images. Bellar. de Imag. Sanct. l. 2. c. 8.

[b] Bellar. lib. cap. 12.

[c] Idem de sanct. beat. l. 1. c. 13.

[d] Concil. Trid. sess. 5. Can. 5.

[e] Bellar. de Concil. author. l. 2. c. 15.

[f] De Rom. pontif. lib. 4. c. 15. 16.

[g] Rhe. Hist. epist. 10. Concil. Trid. l. 22. c. 1, 2, &c.

[h] Sectha. Popes robberie of Christ. large, Pox Acts and Monuments. p. 784. edit. 1583.

[i] Hord. ante. to 3. welant. 4. divis. 15.

The second Conclusion: *Whosoever shall keepe them, and teach men so, the same shall be called great in the kingdome of heaven*; that is, he shall be honoured in the Church of God, and esteemed a worthy member thereof, because by this meanes, he endevoureth to keepe the Law unchangeable for ever. In this conclusion two points are to be considered; the *office* of a faithfull Teacher, and his *reward*: his *office* is two-fold; First, in his owne person he must be a doer of Gods Commandements: Secondly in his publike Ministerie he must teach men so to doe.

The office of a faithfull Teacher.

Doe, and teach.

Here first observe the order of these duties; *Doing* must goe before *Teaching*: This order Christ propounds, and that doubtlesse on speciall grounds; First, because a man cannot with joy and comfort fitly teach others, before himselfe be a doer of the thing he teacheth; for if a man teach others, from the instruction of the spirit, he shall finde his owne heart inclined by the same spirit, to the obedience of the Word he teacheth.

Againe, the experience of the fruit and efficacie of the Word, in his owne person, is the best Commentarie a man can have, for the opening of it unto others: The writings of men with the knowledge of arts and tongues, are excellent helpes; yet if a man want the spirit of God, framing his heart to beleeve, and obey the Word he teacheth, whereby he should become a doer of it: doubtlesse the Word will seeme

seeme but a dreame or riddle unto him, neither can he fitly apply the same unto others, having never had experience of it in his owne soule. This then should move all Ministers, and such as set themselves to this calling, first and chiefely, to labour to become doers of the Word themselves; other helpes of learning are to be sought for with all diligence, to make them fit and able Ministers of so great mysteries; but especially they must labour for the spirit of grace, to frame their hearts to embrace, and their lives to obey the Word which they teach, that so they may be fitted, according to our Saviour Christs direction. Now this spirit is attained, *by knocking at heaven gates by prayer*, Luk. 11. 13. and by *opening the doore of our hearts*, when our Saviour Christ knocketh thereat by his Word, Revel. 3. 20.

[a] Comfort to the faithfull Ministers, and their peoples notwithstanding.

Secondly, in laying downe this duty, our Saviour Christ propoundeth a singular comfort to such faithfull Ministers, as be grieved with the untowardnesse of their people; hee propoundeth not the conversion of the people, as a properties of a faithfull Teacher, but the *doing and teaching* of the will and Word of God. And doubtlesse a man may bee a faithfull Teacher, and yet not convert many unto God: hence the Prophet complaines that hee had [h] *Laboured in vaine, and spent his strength in vaine*: nay, the same Prophet is sent [i] *to blinde the eyes of his people, to make them dull of hearing, and to harden their hearts by his Ministerie*, which was an heavie case: but yet that saying of the Apostle *Paul*, must be remembred; that howsoever unto some, *his Ministerie was the savour of death*; yet [m] *unto God it was alwaies the sweet savour of Christ*. So that a Minister mourning truly for his people, to see their hardnesse of heart, may comfort himselfe with this; that in a good conscience hee endeavoureth to obey the Word of God, and to teach men so.

[h] Isa. 49. 4.
[i] Isa. 6. 9, 10.
[m] 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.

[b] The reward of a faithfull Minister.

I I. Point. The reward of a faithfull Teacher is this; *he shall be counted great in the kingdome of heaven*: that is, he shall be honoured, and counted worthie to be a member of Christs church, both in this life, and in the life to come. This must be remembred, to incite all Ministers to become faithfull Teachers, both in life and doctrine. To get respect in Princes courts, is much sought after on earth: O then, how should this high respect with God prevaile in our hearts to incite us to be faithfull in this calling?

v. 20 *For I say unto you, except your righteousnesse exceed the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharises, you cannot enter into the kingdome of heaven.*

These words are commonly taken to be a Reason of the former verse, by way of answer to a secret objection which the Jewes might frame there-from, to this effect; *Thou sayest, whosoever breaketh one of these least commandements, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdome of heaven: But our Teachers, the Scribes and Pharises, looke to have chiefe place in the kingdome of heaven: and yet* (if thy doctrine be true) *they breake Gods commandements, and teach others so to doe.* Now hereto Christ should answer thus; *I say unto you, except your righteousnesse exceeds theirs, ye cannot enter into the kingdome of heaven.* But if we marke well, the words may more fitly be referred to the 17. verse, as a third reason to prove that Christ came not to destroy the Law, or the Prophets, but to fulfill them; because he exacts at every mans hands, a more perfect and exact righteousnesse, than that which the Scribes and Pharises either have in themselves, or require in others; without which, no man can enter into the kingdome of heaven.

Scope.

In this verse are three points to be handled: First, what these *Scribes* and *Pharises* were: Secondly, what was their *Righteousnesse*: and thirdly, what is that *true Righteousnesse*, whereby a man may enter into the kingdome of heaven, and stand just before God.

A Scribe.

For the first, a *Scribe* is a name of office, whereof there were two sorts among the Jewes: *Civill*, who as Publike Notaries, did register the affaires of Princes; and such a one was *Shimshai*, Ezra 4. 8. And *Ecclesiastical*, who were imployed in the expounding of the Scripture: such an one was *Ezra*, Ezra, 7. 1, 5, 6. And these of whom our Saviour Christ saith, Matth. 13. 52. *Every Scribe taught unto the kingdome of heaven, is like an householder*: and Matth. 23. 2. *The Scribes and Pharises sit in Moses chaire*: that is, they are expounders of the Law of *Moses*. And such Scribes are meant in this place: to wit, men in Ecclesiasticall office, defending from the tribe of *Levi*, who expounded the Law unto the people; and these were all one with the Priests and Levites, under the Law: and therefore *Ezra* is called both a *Scribe* and *Priest*, Nehem. 8. 1, 2.

1 Civill.
2. Ecclesiasticall.

Pharises.

The name *Pharise* betokeneth a sect, not an office; for there were three speciall sects among the Jewes: The *Essenes*, the *Sadducees*, and the *Pharises*. The *Essenes* were like Popish Monkes and Friers, which did separate themselves from the people, vowing and dedicating themselves to live in perpetual sanctity. The *Sadducees* were a sect that did expound the law, according to the letter and syllable, and withall denied the resurrection and the immortalitie of the soule, as is plaine, Acts 23. 8. The *Pharises* were such as did forsake the common exposition of the Scribes, and taught & framed a more exact and strict exposition of the Law, according to the traditions of the Fathers; and they were most holy outwardly, and of chiefe account among the Jewes: and therefore the Apostle *Paul* saith,

3 Sects.
1 Essenes.
2 Sadducees.
3 Pharises.

faith, *what after the most strict sect of their religion he lived a Pharise*; and that he was [o] *a Pharise, the sonne of a Pharise*. Yet besides these three were another sect, called *Herodians*, who (as some thinke) were courtiers, which held and taught that *Herod was the Messiah*. And thus we see what the Scribes and Pharises were, whom Christ here joyneth together for amplification sake: understanding thereby such teachers among the Jewes, *Priests and Levites*, as lived after the most strait custome of the Pharises: for the Pharises were by office Scribes, as we may plainely see by comparing together Joh. 1. 19. with v. 24. where the Priests and Levites (who were Scribes as we have shewed) are called Pharises.

[o] Act. 26. 5.
[o] Act. 23. 6.

Herodians.

I I. Point. What was the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharises, which is here to be debased, as being unable to bring a man to heaven? By the tenour of Scripture it wil appeare, that it was [p] an *externall righteousnesse onely*, standing in the outward observation of the law: for they were carefull to abstaine from actuall grosse sinne, as whoredome, theft, murther, idolatry, and such like, and they were very forward in [q] *fasting, praying, and giving almes openly*, and in [r] keeping *the traditions and ceremonies of the Elders*, and in all things to carrie themselves in shew [s] *conformable to the law*: but the inward righteousnesse of the heart they nothing regarded, thinking that perfect righteousnesse consisted in outward obedience, and by that they looked to be saved; as it is said, Rom. 10. 2. *Neglecting utterly the righteousnesse of God.*

[p] Luk. 11. 39. Matth. 23. 25.
[q] Luk. 18. 11, 12. Matth. 6. 2. 5. 16.
[r] Mat. 7. 3, 4.
[s] Philip. 3. 6.

Mans naturall conceit of righteousnesse.

In these Scribes and Pharises wee may observe, what is the naturall perswasion of man, touching righteousnes: to wit, that an outward righteousnesse will serve the turne: and therefore every man naturally contents himselfe therewith: and hence it is that men will bring their bodies usually to the place of Gods worship to pray, to heare the Word, and receive the Sacraments: but few have care to bring their hearts with them, that they may inwardly worship God in spirit and truth: so likewise, many are content to rest from their ordinarie labours on the Sabbath day, but few are carefull to consecrate their rest unto God: men be carefull to abstaine from actuall murther, but few make conscience of malice, hatred, reviling, and quarrelling: many hate theft, that yet will not sticke to robbe their neighbours of their good name, by vile reports: many are asham'd to robbe openly, that make no bones to deceive by false weights and measures, by glosses, and such like: and yet all these will blesse themselves with their outward righteousnesse, and think all is well, not doubting but they shall be saved by it, though they have no more: but this is Phariſaicall pride and folly: for all such outward righteousnesse is here condemned, as unable to save the soule.

Againe, here we may see the papiste and

Civill Honesty is not sufficient for the soule.

A grosse opinion of all worldly men, even of those who commonly are called honest men: if they be told of their sinnes, and of the danger of damnation, except they repent: their answer is, they are no theeves, no murtherers, no grosse sinners, and therefore they hope God will save them; for they live orderly, and doe no man wrong: but let all such take heed, least they deceive their owne soules, for this *civill honestie* was the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharises, which could neither bring them, nor any other into the kingdome of heaven, as Christ the God of truth saith expressely in this place. To give almes, to fast, to pray, and to deale uprightly with men, be very good things; but yet we must labour for more than these, if ever we meane to come to heaven: we must get another righteousnesse of the heart, renouncing utterly our owne righteousnesse, in the matter of Justification, and condemne our selves for our best actions, that so we may be fit to receive that true righteousnesse, which will commend us unto God.

True righteousnesse.

I I I. Point. What is that true righteousnesse which will bring a man to heaven? *Answ.* It is the righteousnesse of Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 30. for *Christ is made unto us of God, wisdome, righteousnesse*; yea, *he was made sin for us, that we might be made the* [t] *righteousnes of God in him.* This is that righteousnesse, which exceeds the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharises, and whereby a sinner doth stand just before God: for when as by *Adams* fall we all became guiltie of sinne, and thereby subject to the curse of God, and to eternall condemnation, from which we could never have delivered our selves; then it pleased Christ to come from the bosome of his Father, and to become our Saviour, who in his life became obedient to the law for us, and in and by death upon the crosse, suffered whatsoever was due unto our sinnes: which obedience and satisfaction being made by him that was both God and man, was alone al-sufficient, both to free us from the curse of the Law, and also to justifie us before God: and this righteousnesse of Christ, is that which exceeds the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharises, and is able to bring a man to heaven. Yet further for our Justification, Christs righteousnesse hath three parts; the pitiritie of his humane nature, the integritie and obedience of his life, and the merit of his sufferings upon the crosse; and all these must be ours, to answer for our corrupt nature, and sinfull life, deserving a curse and death.

[t] 2 Cor. 5. 21.

Parts of Christs righteousnesse.

Here some make question, how Christs righteousnesse can bee ours? and how one mans righteousnesse can save so many thousands? *Answ.* Christs righteousnesse is not the righteousnesse of a meere man (for then it could save but one at the most,) but it is the righteousnesse of that person, who is both God and man; and therefore is an infinite righteousnesse, of merit sufficient to

Object. 1. Bellarm. de Justificat. l. 2. c. 7.
Answ.

Matt. 5. v. 7. 20.

Object. 2. to save a thousand worlds. But some here say, If Christs righteousnesse be ours, then we are as righteous as Christ. *Answ.* The same righteousnesse that is in Christ, is ours, but not in the same manner or measure: for Christ hath it by merit and action of himselfe, we have it onely by mercie and imputation: it is in Christ as a root and fountaine, in us by reception and application; like the light in the Moone and in the Starres, which is not in them originally, but received from the Sunne, the fountaine thereof. Thirdly, it is said, If we by Christs righteousnesse be justified, and made the Sonnes of God; then is Christ by our sinnes made unjust, and so the childe of the Devill. *Answ.* We may safely say, that Christ was made a sinner by our sinnes, not actually, but by imputation: now hence it will not follow, that he should be the child of the Devill, for that commeth by the act and habit of sinning, after sinnefull conception; all which our Saviour Christ was free from: for at the very time when he bare our sinnes, he was in himselfe more holy than all men, and all Angels. Fourthly, it is said, that if Christs righteousnesse be made ours, then we are made Saviours. *Ans.* It followeth not: for Christs merits and righteousnesse are conveyed and applied unto men, not as they are in Christs person, in whom they are sufficient to save ten thousand worlds, but as they serve to save and justifie that particular person onely, to whom they are imputed: so that this remaines an undoubted truth, that righteousnesse which bringeth salvation, is Christs righteousnesse onely.

Object. 3. Answ.

Object. 4. Answ.

Christs righteousnesse made ours by faith.

Here some may say, How is Christs righteousnesse made ours, and we assured of it? *Ans.* It is made ours by saving faith, which the holy Ghost creates in the heart and soule, as an hand whereby we may lay hold on Christ, and apply his righteousnesse unto our selves, as he is offered unto us in the promises of the Gospel. Some object, that if Christs righteousnesse be made ours, by our beleeving it to be ours, then if a man beleeve his neighbours house to be his, it is his also: and so for any other thing. *Answ.* There is not the like reason in these things: for it is a meere fancie and imagination, if a man to beleeve his neighbours house to be his, having no ground for it, besides his own conceit: but when a man beleeveth Christs righteousnesse to be his, he hath Gods commandement and promise, for his warrant and assurance, that it shall be imputed unto him; and withall that faith so grounded, maketh Christs righteousnesse as truly his, as any thing a man hath is his owne, being given him of another. Now this saving faith, laying hold on Christs righteousnesse, for mans justification, is never severed from sanctification by the spirit, with the fruits thereof, whereby the old man being mortified, and the new man in Christ renewed, according to his image, in knowledge, righteousnesse, and true holinesse, the whole

Sanctification go. eth with Justification.

A person is turned unto God, and made carefull to please him, both in thought, word, and deed: and hereby doe we receive assurance of our justification; for true sanctification is the earnest of the spirit of adoption in our hearts, whereby we are sealed unto the day of our redemption.

The use. 1

Doth that righteousnesse, whereby we must be justified and saved in the day of our Lord, come from Christ onely, and not from our selves? then we see what just cause we have to humble our selves, and to acknowledge our great unrighteousnesse, and want of all goodnesse in our selves: and when we can doe this vnfaindly, we have gone one step in the way to true happinesse. Secondly, we also must hereby learne, to esteeme all things *as drosse and dongue*, with the [a] Apostle, in respect of Christ Jesus, and his righteousnesse: for he it is that brings us to heaven, and therefore we must honour him above all, and value his righteousnesse, as that most precious jewell, which when a man hath found, he will sell all that he hath to get and keepe it, Matth. 23.46. Thirdly, we must hunger and thirst after Christ, and his righteousnesse, for it is the fountaine of all blessednesse, and without it we are most miserable: yea, though we had all the world beside, yet without it we lose our salvation. Now what will it profit a man to winne all the world, if he lose his soule? Fourthly, seeing Christs righteousnesse is made ours by faith, and we made assured of it, by sanctification of heart, and life; we must labour for true faith, whereby our hearts may be inwardly renewed: we must not content our selves with an outward holinesse, for that will never bring a man to heaven; but our endevour must be for inward holinesse, whereby we shal be preferred with God, above all the Pharises in the world, and get assurance of eternall happinesse. And this faith we must shew forth in all holy exercises; as when we heare the Word, we must lend the inward eare of the heart, with the bodily eare; and when we fall downe to prayer, we must bow the knees of our hearts; and in fasting from meat, we must abstaine from sinne: yea, in all things we must be carefull to serve God, in spirit and truth: for which cause, we must pray with *David, Lord renew a right spirit within me*, that so feeling Christ to live in us by grace, we may be assured that Christs righteousnesse shall bring vs unto glorie.

2 Phil 3.8,9.

3 Matth. 16.26.

4 Psal. 51. 10.

V. 21 *Ye have heard that it was said of old, Thou shalt not kill, for whosoever killeth, shall be culpable of judgement.*

Our Saviour Christ having laid downe his Preface, doth here begin his interpretation of the Law, being indeed the onely true Doctor of his Church; and herein especially he doth meddle with the second Table, beginning first

Matth. 5. vers. 21.

first of all with the *sixt Commandement*, touching Murther. In the handling whereof, he observeth this order: First, hee setteth downe the false interpretation of this Law, by the Scribes and Pharises, in this verse: Secondly, he shewes the true meaning of it, v. 22. And lastly, he propoundeth rules of concord and agreement between those that be at variance, v. 23, 24, 25, 26.

For the first: The Exposition. *Ye have heard:* that is, you Jewes which now heare me, whether Scribes, Pharises, or others: *you have heard that it hath beene said of old:* that is, by your ancient Teachers, the old Scribes and Pharises, who have expounded this Law unto you: and that this phrase must be understood of the ancient Jewish Teachers, may plainly appeare, because in the next verse hee opposeth his owne teaching thereunto, and would have these his hearers, that before had learned a false interpretation of this Law, from their old Teachers, now to learne of him the true exposition thereof. The Law is this, *Thou shalt not kill:* The exposition of the ancient Jewish Teachers was this, *For whosoever killeth shall bee culpable of judgement:* that is, whosoever layeth violent hands on another, to take away his life (for they knew no other murther, neither did they extend this Commandement to forbid any sin, but actuall murther) *shall be culpable of judgement:* that is, shall be held guiltie of murther, both in the Courts of men, and also before the Judgement seat of God, where he shall receive the deserved punishment thereof. This was the interpretation of the Jewes.

Antiquitie no infallible marke of truth.

Here first observe, that antiquitie is no infallible marke of true doctrine: for this exposition of this Commandement was ancient, received from ancient Teachers; and yet Christ, the Doctor of truth, rejecteth it, as false and corrupt: and therefore the argument which the Papists use, for the stablishing of their religion, drawen from antiquitie, is of no effect.

How the Pharises expounded the Law.

Secondly, by these words of Christ, *ye have heard, it hath beene said of old*, we may easily gather, after what manner the Scribes and Pharises expounded the Law; namely, they left the Scriptures, and followed the interpretation of their ancient Teachers. But here Christ checketh and reproveth this manner of teaching: and therefore the like cannot bee warrantable among us at this day: whereby we see that kind of teaching reproved, wherein everie point is stuffed out with the testimonies of Fathers, Schoolemen, and humane writers. And here also is discovered a wicked and dangerous practice of the [i] Papists, who referre all deciding of controversies, and interpretation of hard places of Scripture, to the Church and to the Fathers. If we say that Fathers oft dissent, and the Church may erre, then they send us to [k] the Popes breast. But if this course were safe, then the Jewish teachers might have had a good defence against this charge of Christ: for they had both Church and Fathers on their side, and the

i Bilner. Trib. pref. ie. 1. 19.

k Hist. conf. with Rainold. cha. 3. div. 1.

A high Priest that was then in place. Indeed the Fathers must bee reverenced, as lights of the Church in their time, and their testimonies duly regarded, wherein they agree with the written word: but for the confirmation of the truth in mans conscience, and for the edifying of the soule in the graces of the spirit, the word of God hath the only stroke: by it alone Gods children are begotten, and borne anew to a lively hope, and by it alone they are fed and nourished in the faith: yea, by it alone they are confirmed and stablished in the truth.

Thirdly, in these Jewish Teachers, forbidding nothing as a breach of this Law, but the outward sinne of murther; and on the contrarie, approving of those as keepers of this Law, that kept their hands from this Actuall crime of bloud, and by consequent worthy of life everlasting; behold a plaine picture of everie naturall man: for is not this the common opinion, that unlesse a man kill another, hee breakes not this Commandement? and so for the rest, if he abstaine from the outward actuall grosse sinnes of stealing, adulterie, and false witnes bearing, then he keepes those Commandements though his heart bee never so full fraught with envie, malice, lust, covetousnesse, falshood, &c. Let us observe Christs reproofe of such erroneous interpretations of Gods Law, as a meanes to choose our hearts from such vaine conceits.

Man in his corrupt principles.

V. 22 *But I say unto you, whosoever shall be angrie with his brother unadvisedly, shall bee culpable of judgement: & whosoever saith unto his brother, Raca, shal be worthy to be punished by the Councel: & whosoever shall say, foole, shall be worthy to be punished by hell fire.*

Here our Saviour Christ propounds the true interpretation of this Commandement: *But I say unto you*, that is, whatsoever you have heard the Scribes or Pharises teach you from themselves, or from their fathers, it is nothing, let them not deceive you: for I that am the Lawgiver and Doctor of my Church, and therefore best know the meaning of my owne Law, I say otherwise unto you: *whosoever is angrie with his brother, &c.* Here Christ layes downe three kindes of murther, and three degrees of punishments for the same. The first degree of murther is *Anger*, not anger simply: but *rash* and *indiscreet anger* towards a brother: and by *Brother* he meaneth, first, one Jew with another, to whom Christ spake; secondly, one neighbour with another, whether Jew or Gentile: for by creation wee are all brethren, having

Expo.

1 Third grees of murther.

2 ving one father which is God, as *Adam* is called the sonne of God, *Luk.* 3. 38. The second degree of murther, is *calling his brother Raca.* Some expound this word *Raca*, an idle or emptie braine: others, an evill man: others take it to signifie a loathsome man, one to be spit at, as we by spitting use to shew our contempt: but these interpretations cannot so fitly stand: for then the third degree of murther and this second, should be one and the same: for to call a man emptie braine, evill, or loathsome, and to call him foole, are equall in degree. Now Christs intent is to set downe distinct degrees of murther, as is evident by the distinct degrees of punishment adjoyned thereunto. A more fit exposition is this, that *Raca* hath no perfect signification, but is only an interjection of indignation, whereby a man doth not slander or revile his brother, but only in gesture shew the contempt and anger of his heart against him; as when in English we say, *fie, tush*, or such like: which words are not open railings, but only outward signes of the inward anger and contempt concealed in the heart; so that the meaning is this; He that is angrie with his brother, and expresseth this his anger either in gesture or countenance, by frowning looks, gnashing of teeth, or by imperfect speech, as tush, fie, pish, or such like, he is guiltie of murther. The third degree of murther is, when a man doth shew his anger against his brother by open railings, and reprochfull names; expressed in these words, *Whosoever shall call his brother foole.* And all these three degrees are beyond the interpretation of the Jewish Teachers, who only condemned actuall killing by this Commandement.

3 Now to these severall kinds of murther, Christ addeth distinct degrees of punishment, The first is, *to be culpable of judgement* for unadvised anger. The second, *to be worthy to bee punished with a Councell*, for outward signes of this anger. The third is *to be worthy of hell fire*, for reprochfull names or railings. And here we must understand, that Christ speaketh not properly, in setting downe these degrees of punishment, but figuratively alluding to the custome of punishing offenders used among the Jewes: for they had three Courts: The first was held by *three men* for meane matters, and other cases of small importance. The second was held by *three and twenty men*, wherein were determined matters of great importance, that could not be decided in the first Court; as matters of life and death: and it was kept in the chiefe cities of the Land. The third Court was held at Jerusalem only, called the Court of the *Seventie-two*, from which none might appeale to any other. In it were all weightie and great causes determined, and this Court is here called *a Councell.* Now Christ alluding hereto, saith to this effect: *Looke as among you Iewes there are different Courts, and some matters are adjudged in your Courts of judgement, and others in the Councell at Jerusalem; so God also he hath his*

Courts among the Iewes, three. B. Fagius in Deut. 16.

A *Iudgement, and his Councell: those that are rashly angrie, shall undergoe Gods judgement: and he that makes known his anger by speech or countenance, shall be punished more grievously, and undergoe a deeper judgement, as it were by the Lords Councell: but he that shall by open revilings and railings, shew forth his malice against his brother; as by calling him foole, or such like, he shall bee worthy the most grievous judgement and torment of hell fire:* alluding to the highest degree of torment among the Jewes, which was *burning*: for before their Government was taken from them by *Herod*, the Jewes used these foure kindes of punishments; hanging, beheading, stoning, and burning. Further, B the words translated *hell fire*, are properly the fire of *Gehenna*; for there was a place neere to the suburbs of Jerusalem called *Gehenna*, which is a compound Hebrew word, signifying the *valley of Hinnom*, wherein was a place called *Tophet*, Jer. 7. 31. where the idolatrous Jewes, following the horrible superstition of the Nations about them, used to burne their children unto *Molech*: for which fact the place became so odious to the godly, that to aggravate the heinousnesse of this crime, they used this name to signifie and betoken the place of torment appointed for the reprobate: whereupon in Christs time, *Gehenna*, and *the fire of hell*, were in signification all one. Now in this valley the Jewes used to burne their malefactors; and unto this kinde of judgement Christ alludeth, C meaning not simply hell fire, the torments of the damned, but a more grievous and greater kinde of punishment than the former, because it was an higher degree of sinne: so that Christs meaning is this; *Howsoever your Scribes and Pharises teach you, that there is no murther but actuall killing, and that it only deserves condemnation: yet I which am the Law-giver, say unto you, that as you have diverse punishments in severall Courts for diverse offences, as hanging, stoning, and burning: so God hee hath diverse degrees of punishments for the severall breaches of this Commandement: he that is rashly angrie, is worthy of judgement: and he that gives out any shew of his anger in gesture, shall be punished more grievously: but he that shewes forth his anger by railing and reviling, shall endure the most grievous punishment of all.*

Columna.

Rhem. on this place.

First, whereas Christ here maketh degrees of punishments for diverse sinnes, the Papists hereon would build their distinction of sinnes into *veniall* and *mortall*. *Veniall sins* (say they) are light sinnes, as bad thoughts, vaine speeches, and such like, which doe not deserve damnation, but some temporall punishment onely, such as were allotted to civill courts among the Jewes: for here (say they) Christ onely makes open railing and reviling of our brother, such an heinous sinne as deserves hell fire. But this distinction cannot here bee grounded: for Christ doth not appropriate condemnation to this terme of *hell fire*: but he hath reference thereto

thereto in everie phrase that here imports a punishment; as, to be *culpable of judgement for unadvised anger*, is to deserve condemnation in hell fire; and *to be punished by a Councell*, for testifying anger by outward signes, *is to deserve condemnation*, but yet in deeper degree: And *to be worthy to be punished with the fire of Gehenna, for open railing*, is to deserve condemnation also, but yet in a deeper measure than the former: for as among the Jewes by the sentence of their Courts, some offences were punished by beheading or hanging; greater offences by stoning, and the greatest by burning; all which punishments differed in degree, and yet everie one was death: so before God, lesser sinnes deserve lesser condemnation in hell fire, and greater sinnes deeper damnation; and yet everie sin deserves damnation: for the *wages of sinne*, be it never so little, *is death*, Rom. 6. 23. so that Christ here makes degrees of punishment according to the degrees of sinne; and yet so, as everie sinne is mortall, deserving damnation, and none veniall in it selfe.

2. Rules for the expounding of the Law.

1 Secondly, wee may here observe two excellent Rules for the expounding of the Morall Law: First, *that under one sin named in a Commandement, are forbidden all sinnes of the same kinde, with all the causes thereof:* For Christ in expounding this sixth Commandement, doth not only condemne Actuall murther, but even Rash anger in the heart, and all signes thereof in countenance and gesture, with all railing and reviling speeches, as breaches of this Commandement: and the like he observeth in these which follow. *II. Rule. To the breach of everie Commandement, there is annexed a curse, albeit it be not expressed:* For Christ here setting downe the breaches of this sixth Commandement threateth condemnation to the least breach thereof, saying, *He that is unadvisedly angrie with his brother, shall bee culpable of judgement.* Is it not then a wonder to see, how ignorant people doe use the Commandements for prayers, when as indeed (if they could perceive it) they are Gods thunderbolts, to throw their soules to hell for everie sin they commit?

Thirdly, Christ condemning unadvised anger as a breach of this Law, giveth us to understand, that advised anger is not unlawfull: and true it is, that all anger is not sinnefull: for a *Christ* was oftimes angrie with the Jewes, and the Apostle bids us b *to be angrie, but sinne not.* If any here aske, how wee may discerne godly anger, from that which is evill and unadvised: *I answer*, two wayes: First, by the beginning of it: for good anger proceedeth from the love of him with whom wee are angrie; now love is the fulfilling of the Law, and therefore anger proceeding from love and guided thereby, cannot be a breach thereof: but evill anger proceedeth from self-love, from dislike or hatred of the partie with whom we are angrie. Secondly, we may discerne it by the end. Good anger is for Gods glorie against sinne, because

Advised anger not unlawfull.

a Mark. 3. 5.
b Ephes. 4. 26.

How lawfull anger may be discerned.

1

2

A God thereby is dishonoured: and for our brothers good: but evill anger wants these ends, and intendeth private respects. It is quickly moved, it continueth long, and also carrieth with it a desire of revenge.

Fourthly, seeing unadvised anger, with the signe thereof, is a breach of this Law, deserving death; hereby wee are admonished to beware of this headstrong affection of anger, and betime to restraine and bridle the same: it hath a bad beginning, and an evill end, and thereby we become murtherers. Now that we may overrule it, so as it prevaile not against us: first, we must lay to our hearts this Commandement of God, forbidding rash anger, as a barre to stop it. Secondly, we must remember, how lovingly and mercifully God deales with us everie day, in forbearing and forgiving us: and therefore wee ought to be like minded towards our brethren, Epheſ. 4. 31, 32.

Anger must be bridled.

How.

3

2

The second branch of sinne here condemned is, *to say unto our brother, Raca*: whereby wee may see that everie gesture expressing rash anger, and despite of heart towards another, is n uther before God; as *casting downe the countenance towards him*: this God reproved in *Cain*, Gen. 4. 6. *frowning or nodding the head*, or *shaking* it in contempt, as the Jewes did to Christ, Mat. 27. 39. also *contemptuous laughter and deriding*: hence c *Ismael jeering at Isaac, is called persecution*, Gal. 5. 29. and the like may be said of all signes of contempt in words: as *fie, pish, tush*, and to (*thou*) a man in disdaine, for otherwise a superiour may *thou* his inferiour: so also when a man *contemptuously takes a thing in snuffe*, though hee say nothing, but *flings away* with an heart rising against his brother. All these and such like tokens of contempt and disdaine, are here condemned for murther of heart: and therefore it standeth us in hand, to make conscience of everie gesture of our body, of the casting of our eyes, of our laughter, and of all passionate words, least thereby wee shew any contempt or anger towards our brethren.

Signes of Iesuite are degrees of murther.

1

2

3

c Gen. 21. 9.

4

5

Make conscience of gesture.

C If it be said, how can everie gesture expressing rash anger or contempt be murther, seeing the Law permits a widdow to d *spit in the face of her husbands brother, or next kinsman*, even *before the Elders of the citie if he refused to raise up seed unto his brother.* Answ. First, the Lord might command her so to doe, thereby to manifest his great dislike of want of love in him towards his dead brother. Secondly, I answer, the words may as fitly be translated thus, *and spit in his sight*, that is, spit on the ground before his face, that hee might see her: and that seemeth to bee the true meaning of that place: for it was verie unseemely for any one, much more for a woman, so publikely to spit in a mans face. And in that sense is the word used, in the same booke, Deut. 4. 37. where God is said to bring Israel out of Ægypt *in his face*, that is, *in his sight*.

d Deut. 25. 7, 8, 9.

Secondly, under this branch of *murther by*

signe

Abuſes of the tongue.

2

a Prov.12.18.

b Epheſ.4.31.

3

c Prov.15.28.

4

5

Reviling termes of ſcolding.

1 Perverſe practices here forbidden.

Vſurie.

2 Hoarding up of corne.

3 Fighting.

ſigne of contempt, are many abuſes of the tongue moſt juſtly condemned: as firſt, *bitterneſſe of ſpeech*; when men that be at variance, give out hard and grievous words one againſt another: theſe are as *pricks of ſwords*, as the wiſe man ſaith: and therefore the Holy Ghoſt chargeth us, that [a] *all bitterneſſe, anger, and wrath be put away from u.* Secondly, all *wrangling*, and *contentious ſpeech* betweene parties diſagreeing, when as neither will yeeld, but each one will thinke to have the laſt word: Philip.2.14. *Doe all things without murmuring and reaſoning*: for that ſpringeth of choller and ſtout ſtomack, cleane contrarie to meekneſſe and patience, a fruit of the ſpirit. Thirdly, [b] *crying* alſo is here forbidden, whereby men or women being at variance in private ſpeeches, doe through choller and malice lift up their voices, that they may bee heard afarre off. This is a fruit of raging anger, and furie. Fourthly, *threatning ſpeeches* are alſo here condemned, when as men from an inward diſlike and rage in their owne private cauſe, do give out menacing words againſt others: Epheſ.6.9. *Maſters are forbidden thus to deale with their ſervants*: much leſſe then may one brother thus threaten another. Fifthly, all kinde of *girding* and *taunting* others by privie and cloſe nips, is here condemned, although there be no open railing: for thereby men ſeeke to diſgrace their brethren, and to glad their owne hearts by grieving others; which is more than to ſay, *Raca*.

The third degree of murther is, in *Reviling termes*, calling our brother *foole*, or ſuch like: this alſo is a ſin againſt the ninth Commandement, by robbing him of his good name: for one ſinne in divers reſpects may be againſt many Commandements. It is a breach of this ſixth Commandement, in that hereby we grieve and trouble our neighbour, and ſo far as a reproach can goe, make him wearie of his life.

Upon the ground of this degree of murther, bee all grievous practices of men againſt their brethren, juſtly condemned for bloudie practices. As firſt, *Vſurie*, whereby men binde their brethren to returne gaine, for the bare lone of money or other goods, which naturally yeeld no increaſe; without all reſpect to their neceſſitie, or to the ſucceſſe of the imploying of it. Hereby many are brought to great poverties: reviling termes doe nothing ſo much pinch the poore, as this oppreſſion. Secondly, the *hoarding up of corne till times of dearth, that thereby they may gaine the more*: theſe men make a private gaine of Gods common judgements upon the poore. Indeed it is not unlawfull in time of plentie, to lay up ſtore againſt a time of dearth: but to doe it with the hurt of the poore, is to ſucke their bloud, and to eat up Gods people: as when men keepe their garners full, and ſuffer the poore to ſtarve; the peoples curſe lies on ſuch, Prov. 11. 26. Thirdly, *fighting and ſtriking by private perſons, or by others in private cauſes*: for they wound or weaken

A the bodie of their neighbours, which is more than to grieve him by reviling ſpeeches. Fourthly, the *detaining the food of the ſoule*, by thoſe that cannot, or will not preach, is a dammage againſt eternall life: and therefore *Paul* to cleare himſelfe from bloud in this behalfe, ſaid, *He kept nothing backe*, Act.20.26,27. Fifthly, to *give offence* by word or deed, whereby others are occaſioned to fall: this is *uncharitable walking*, Rom.14.15. whereby we doe as much as in us lieth, *deſtroy him for whom Chriſt died*. As this is cruell in all, ſo eſpecially in publike perſons, as Magiſtrates, Miniſters, Patents, Maſters, and ſuch like, becauſe their practices are Rules to their inferiours. They are like lights in an haven, which guides the ſhips that ſaile by night, which ſtanding amiſſe, lead the ſhips upon rocks and ſands, and ſo cauſe ſhipwracke.

B Having ſeene the true meaning of this Law expounded by Chriſt, let us here further obſerve, how hee reſtoreth the true uſe thereof. We muſt not thinke, that hee did only here intend the rectifying of our judgements for underſtanding, and not alſo ſtrike at the reformation of our hearts and lives for practice. Touching the uſe of this law therefore, Chriſt here teacheth us two things: Firſt, to deſcend into our owne hearts, and there to ſearch how wee have broken this Commandement: as whether we have borne in our hearts any malice againſt our brother, and whether we have expreſſed the

C raſh anger of our hearts by ſpeech or geſture, or have any way wronged him by reviling termes, or other injuries againſt his life: if wee have, Chriſt tells us we are murtherers.

Secondly, Chriſt ſetting downe the curſe to everie degree of murther; teacheth us, upon due examination of our hearts, finding our ſelves guiltie in any degree, to caſt downe our ſelves before the Lord, to accuſe and condemne our ſelves, crying out that all ſhame and confuſion belongs unto us: this wee muſt doe, that by the view of our miſeries, wee may bee moved more earneſtly to ſue for mercie. And indeed, if wee examine our hearts, and our behaviours thorowly, we ſhall finde, that we are all murtherers. For though we may bee free from

D actuall killing, yet our conſciences will tell us, that the motions of wrath and malice, and the ſignes of unadviſed anger have broken forth, both in our words and geſture: for who can ſay, he never *ſnuffed* at another by way of contempt or diſlike? who can cleare himſelfe from *deriding* and *diſgracing* others? Now theſe things and ſuch like, make us guiltie of ſinne againſt the Law, and ſo ſubject to the wrath and curſe of God: which needs muſt be fulfilled, though heaven and earth ſhould paſſe away. This undoubtedly is our miſerable and wofull caſe in our ſelves. And there is no way to eſcape this curſe, but only this: wee muſt humble our ſelves before God, and confeſſe againſt our ſelves the murther of our hearts,

4 Soule-ſtarving.

5 Offending.

The true uſe of this Law.

1. Search our hearts.

2. Judge our ſelves.

our hearts, declared in our geſture, ſpeech, and behaviour, then we muſt labour to be grieved for theſe ſinnes; for which end we muſt apply unto our ſelves, Gods fearefull judgements due unto us for them. Thirdly, we muſt earneſtly ſue unto God for mercie and pardon, as for life and death, like as poore priſoners do, when the ſentence of death is to bee pronounced againſt them: yea, wee muſt cry with ſighs and groanes that cannot be expreſſed, and give the Lord no reſt, till hee ſend into our conſciences the comfortable meſſage of mercie and pardon by his good ſpirit. This done, we muſt labour in our callings for the time to come, to procure and further the welfare and ſafetie of our brethren, as well as our owne: we muſt not ſeek our ſelves, but the common good, eſchewing thoſe things that may grieve our brethren, and doing thoſe that may bee good and comfortable unto them, that ſo by new obedience wee may ſhew forth thankfulneſſe for Gods mercie and favour towards us.

Actuall killing.

Hitherto we have handled the three degrees of murther, which Chriſt condemneth by this Law, beyond the doctrine of the Jewiſh teachers. Beſides theſe, there is a fouth degree here condemned, which is *actuall killing*. This Chriſt doth not here name, becauſe hee taketh it for granted, even by the doctrine of the Scribes and Phariſes. Now becauſe it is the maine ſin of this Commandement, therefore here it is to be handled; which we will doe thus: firſt, we will ſhew when killing is murther, and when it is not, and then handle the kindes thereof.

When killing is allowed.

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a Gen.22.2. 20,11.

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b Pſal.106.30,31.

For the firſt: *Killing* is not alwaies murther, for ſometime a man hath power given of God to kill, and it is no ſinne: now God gives a man power to kil three waies: I. by the *written word*: thus Princes and Governours, and under them Executioners, are allowed to kill malefactours that deſerve death: and thus Souldiers are warranted to kill their enemies in a lawfull war: II. by an *ex raordinarie Commandement*: and ſo *Abraham* might lawfully have killed his ſon, if the [a] Angell of the Lord had not ſtayed his hand: III. by an extraordinarie inſtinct, which is anſwerable to a ſpeciall Commandement: and ſo [b] *Phineas* ſlew *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, without guilt of murther. But killing is murther, when men of their owne wils, without warrant from God, ſlay others: and this ſinne is plainely and directly forbidden in this Commandement.

The kindes of killing. 1. Voluntarie.

II. Point. The kinds of killing be two; either *voluntarie*, or *caſuall*. *Voluntarie* killing is, when a man killeth of *purpoſe* and *intent*: and this ſin is ſo heinous, that it *defileth the land* where the bloud is ſhed, till it be purged by the bloud of him that ſhed it. And this *purpoſe to kill* is twofold: either *with deliberation* and force-deſire of revenge, as when a man hath carried a grudge in his heart long before: or *without deliberation*, when a man without all former malice is ſuddenly carried by furie and anger to ſlay his brother: and this ſecond kinde of killing is diſtin-

c Numb.35.33.

A guished from that which is more deliberate, by the name of *man-ſlaughter*, and alſo favored by the lawes of ſome Countries, becauſe it is not done of ſet purpoſe, but through ſudden anger before the bloud be cold: but Gods Law maketh both of them murther, and adiudgeth [c] no *recompence for the life of the murtherer*: nay, he doe adiudgeth the murtherer to eternall death, both in ſoule and body. To this voluntarie murther, we muſt referre thoſe that give commandement, counſell, or helpe unto the murtherer: for hee that commandeth is the principall Agent, and the murtherer is his Inſtrument. Againe, it is voluntarie murther to ſtrike another, though with purpoſe only to wound, if death follow thereon. And that alſo which is committed by a drunken man: for his will is free, though ſenſe and reaſon bee blinded.

Man-ſlaughter is murther.

2 Numb.35.31.

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Caſuall killing.

Caſuall killing, commonly called *chance medly*, is when a man killeth another, having no purpoſe to do him hurt. The preſumptions of caſuall killing be theſe: *Firſt*, if a man kill another, having no ill will or anger towards him, nor to any other for his ſake; neither is moved thereto by covetouſneſſe, or any affection. *Secondly*, if he bee doing the lawfull duties of his particular calling. *Thirdly*, if he be well occupied, doing ſome lawfull work beſide his calling. And *Laſtly*, if he be doing a thing which he ordinarily practiſeth, keeping his ſtiall place and time. And albeit this kind of killing, if it be merely caſual, is no ſinne, yet the partie committing it, in old time was bound to come to his anſwer, thereby to purge and cleare himſelfe from ſuſpition of murther, as alſo to avoid the hatred and danger of the friends of the partie killed; and laſtly to keep & maintaine the hatred of murther among Gods people. Now this ſixt Commandement is not to be underſtood of caſuall, but of voluntarie killing. And this alſo muſt be obſerved, that Chriſt giveth the name of murther, to all the occaſions thereof, that he might breed in our hearts an hatred of them all, as of murther it ſelfe.

The ſignes thereof.

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V. 23 *If then thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee,*

24 *Leave there thy gift before the Altar, goe thy waies, firſt bee reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift.*

Here Chriſt propounds a Rule of concord, by ſeeking reconciliation with them whom we have wronged: and it depends upon the former verſe, as a conſequent and concluſion

E 2 depen-

Coherence.

drawen therefrom, as may appeare by the firſt words, *If then*, or *therefore*: as if he had ſaid, If raſh anger and the teſtification thereof, either in geſture, or reviling ſpeech, be murther, and deſerve condemnation, then we are with all diligence to ſeeke to bee reconciled to our brethren, whenſoever any breach of love is made betweene them and us.

The *Expoſition*. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar*] Here Chriſt alludeth to the Jewes manner of worſhip under the Law; which was, to offer in the Temple ſacrifices unto God both of propitiation, and thankſgiving. And though Chriſt here only name this one kinde of ceremoniall worſhip, yet under this hee comprehendeth all manner of true outward worſhip, whether Legall or Evangelicall; as if he ſhould ſay, *If thou come to worſhip God any way*, either by offering ſacrifices, or by praying unto God, by hearing his Word, or receiving the Sacraments; *and remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee*, that is, that thou haſt any way wronged and offended thy brother: this appeareth to be the true meaning by the like words of [a] *Marke*, *If thou haſt ought againſt thy brother*, (meaning for injurie done unto thee by him) *forgiue him*: and therefore our brother hath ſomething againſt us, when we have wronged or offended him in word or deed, and he hath knowledge thereof, and juſt cauſe thereupon to complaine.

[a] Mar.11.25.

Leave there thy gift before the Altar] Still he alludeth to the manner of the Jewes worſhip; who when they went to ſacrifice to the Lord, brought their ſheepe or bullocke unto the utter Court: or as ſome thinke, tied it to the hornes of the Altar, in token that they preſented it unto the Lord: now if at that verie inſtant, they did remember that they had any way offended their brother, then were they to leave their gift there, (not quite omitting this dutie, but only ſuſpending or deferring it for a while) and goe ſeeke to be reconciled to their brother whom they had wronged.

Queſtion. How could this departure bee warrantable, ſeeing the Jewes had a law [b] that when the ſervice of God was once begun, *none might depart, no not the Prince himſelfe, till it was ended?* *Anſw*. This Rule muſt bee underſtood of departure out of the utter Court of the Temple, whither the people brought their ſacrifice ſoone after they had preſented it, before it was begun to be offered: for till the Prieſts had begun this ſervice, it was lawfull for the people to depart, eſpecially upon this occaſion.

[b] Ezek.46.10.

Queſtion. *II*. But what if the partie offending, cannot poſſibly come to his brother whom hee hath wronged, by reaſon of his abſence in ſome faire countrey, his cloſe impriſonment, or ſuch like? *Anſw*. He muſt teſtifie his endevour to be reconciled unto him: and if the act it ſelfe be neceſſarily hindred by Gods providence, God will accept the will for the deed, if there bee a willing minde: for this is

A Chriſts meaning, that we ſhould doe our utmoſt endevour to bee reconciled unto our brethren whom wee have wronged, ſhewing ſuch care thereof, that wee preferre the ſame before the outward actions of Gods worſhip, not preſuming to worſhip God, till we be reconciled to our brethren.

Here wee have a notable Rule for the maintaining of love and charitie among men; namely, *brotherly reconciliation*. In the giving whereof Chriſt ſtill continues his expoſition of the ſixth Commandement: for having condemned murther, and the provocations thereunto, in the former verſe; here hee commandeth the contrarie vertue of brotherly love, and the meanes to uphold the ſame; to wit, Reconciliation for offences given.

B Out of this Rule in generall we may obſerve: firſt, a Third direction to the right expounding and underſtanding of Gods Commandements; namely, *where any vice is forbidden, there the contrarie vertue is commanded*: and on the contrarie, *where any vertue is commanded, there the contrarie vice is forbidden*. This Rule muſt be obſerved as a priviledge of the Law of God, above all humane lawes: for mens lawes are ſatiſfied, by abſtaining from the vice forbidden, though the contrarie vertue bee not practiſed: as he ſatiſfies mans law, forbidding murther, that abſtaines from the actuall crime, though he love not his brother: But hee tranſgreſſeth the Law of God, that performeth not the contrarie vertue, though he abſtaine from the vice forbidden: for though a man abſtaine from killing, yet if he doe not love his brother, he is guiltie of the breach of this ſixth Commandement; which ſerves to confute the errour of our ignorant people, who becauſe they abſtaine from Murther, Adulterie, and other outward ſinnes, doe perſwade themſelves that they keepe the Law, and that God will therefore be mercifull unto them. But they muſt know, that though they ſhould abſtaine from the vices forbidden, yet they ſtand culpable of Judgement, for want of doing the contrarie vertues: for it is not ſufficient to abſtaine from evill, but we muſt doe good, and therefore *Iohn Baptiſt* ſaith, [a] *Everie tree that bringeth not forth fruit, is hewen downe, and caſt into the fire*: and the ſentence of damnation ſhall bee denounced againſt the Reprobates, for their omiſſion of doing good: [b] *I was hungrie, and ye gave me no meat, &c.*

A third rule for expounding Gods Commandement.

[a] Matth.3.10.

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[b] Matth.25.42.

Secondly, by this Rule of Reconciliation, it appeareth that the performance of any outward ſervice unto God, is diſpleaſing unto him, if it be ſeparated from the love of our brethren: Iſa.1.11,12. *What have I to doe with the multitude of your ſacrifices, ſaith the Lord*: and ſo he proceedeth, rejecting in particular, all the ſervice of the Jewes, becauſe they lived in envie, debate, and oppreſſion: *Their hands were full of bloud*, Iſa. 58. 5, 6. The Lord doth there reprehend the Jewes faſting from meats, becauſe

God rejects ſacrifice without mercie.

Matth.5. verſ.23,24.

cauſe they did not withall abſtaine from ſtrife, and oppreſſion; adding withall, that *refraining from crueltie, and doing works of mercie, is the faſt which he requires*: which ſerves to overthrow the naturall conceit of men, who thinke that the whole worſhip of God, ſtandeth in the duties of the firſt Table. This was indeed the conceit and practice of the Phariſes, whereupon they taught the people, *That if they gave oblations to the Church, though they releeved not their poore parents, yet God was pleaſed with them*. And the like is the practice of the Church of Rome, who in caſes of tranſgreſſion, through want of brotherly love, doe not appoint this Reconciliation, but Auricular confeſſion, and Canonicall ſatisfaction, as matters well pleaſing unto Almightie God: yea, ſuch is the conceit of our common people, that if they be preſent at Divine Service, if they heare the Word preached, and receive the Sacraments at ordinarie times, then they have done God good ſervice, and he will reſpect them, though in their civill converſation they bee at enmitie with their brethren, or live in ſuch like ſins. But we muſt learne, that God is ſerved, not only in the duties of the firſt Table, but of the ſecond alſo; and that God abhors the duties of pietie in ſuch perſons as make no conſcience of the practice of love and mercie: Ier.7.9,10. *Will you ſteale, murther, commit adulterie, &c. and yet come and ſtand before me in this houſe, wherein my name is called, and ſay, Wee are delivered though we have done all theſe abhominations?* as if he ſhould ſay, *Never thinke it*: and therefore if we deſire true comfort in our ſerving of God, let us make conſcience to joyne therewith the practice of mercie towards our brethren.

A duties of Communicants.

Thirdly, here alſo wee may learne, how to behave our ſelves before we come to the Lords Table: if we call to minde, even when we be in the Church, that we have any way offended our brother, wee muſt firſt goe and reconcile our ſelves unto him, and then come to the Lords Table: we muſt not abſtaine upon the remembrance of our wrong doing, for ſo wee adde ſinne unto ſinne, refuſing ſpirituall ſocietie with God, becauſe we will retaine enmitie towards our brother; but ſeeking ſpeedily reconciliation, we muſt returne to receive the Lords Sacrament. Which flatly condemnes the common practice of many, who abſtaine from the Lords Supper, becauſe they will not ſeeke to be reconciled to their brethren. This argues an heart full ſtuft with pride and malice, which prefers it owne luſt before the will of God: for God commands that the Sunne gee not downe upon our wrath; and it is his ordinance we ſhould receive the Sacrament to ſhew forth Chriſts death, when it is adminiſtred by the Church, againſt both which hee offendeth that abſtaineth, becauſe he is at variance with his brother: for Chriſt will not have the gift that is brought to be taken away, but there left a while, till reconciliation be made.

A Fourthly, in this Rule of Reconciliation, we may ſee, *there be degrees in the duties of Gods worſhip*; all are not equall, but ſome more, and ſome leſſe neceſſarie. The firſt and higheſt degree of holy worſhip, is preſcribed in the firſt Commandement, as *to love, feare and rejoyce in God above all*, and to beleeve in him, and all his promiſes. The ſecond degree of holy duties, is to *love our neighbour as our ſelves, to ſeeke peace and reconciliation with them whom wee have wronged or offended*. Thus much doth Chriſt here import, in preferring the practice hereof before the offering of ſacrifice. The third degree conſiſts, *in the outward ceremoniall duties of Gods worſhip*, commanded in the firſt Table: as the outward actions of Gods worſhip, and the outward ſolemnitie of the Sabbath: for theſe give place to the works of love and charitie commanded in the ſecond Table, and therefore Chriſt ſaith, *Firſt bee reconciled, and then offer thy gift*.

Degrees of duties in Gods worſhip.

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Now by this diſtinction of holy duties, wee have a good direction for our behaviour: that ſeeing the love of God and of our brethren, are the two higheſt degrees of good workes, therefore we are above all things to ſeeke after them, and to preferre the doing of them before the outward worſhip of God; for that we ſee commeth in the laſt place. But the practice of men is otherwiſe; generally they are more forward in outward ceremonies, than in the mine duties of the love of God, and of their brethren; like to the Phariſes, [d] who paſſed over judgement and the feare of God, and were verie ſtrict in tything mint and rue: but this is a prepoſterous courſe, and cleane contrarie to this precept of our Saviour Chriſt.

A motive to the practice of love to God and man.

[d] Luk.11.42.

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Thus much of this Rule in generall. Now I come to more particular obſervations out of the words: *Leave thy gift at the Altar*] Here Chriſt approveth of this worſhip of God among the Jewes by offering ſacrifices; from whence it followeth, that ſacrificing at the Altar, and by proportion other ceremoniall worſhip, was not abrogated either at Chriſts birth, or Baptiſme, for here Chriſt alloweth of them; and therefore they ceaſed only at his death, when upon the croſſe hee ſaid, [e] *It is finiſhed*, then [f] *he put out the hand-writing of ordinances that was againſt us*.

Ceremoniall worſhip not abrogated till Chriſts death.

[e] Ioh.19.30.

[f] Col.2.4.

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Thy gift; that is, thy ſacrifice; whereof the Jewes had two kindes: *Propitiatorie*, and *Gratulatorie*, or of thankſgiving: and they are here called *gifts*, becauſe in ſacrificing the people gave ſome thing unto God: in which reſpect a ſacrifice differeth from a Sacrament, wherein God gives ſomething unto us. Now the ſacrifices of the Law, wherein men gave ſomething unto God, ſignified two things, firſt, that Chriſt ſhould give himſelfe unto his Father for our ſinnes: ſecondly, that we ſhould wholly give our ſelves unto God, both in ſoule and bodie, to ſerve him: and therefore God ſaith, Prov. 23. 26. *My ſonne, give mee thy heart*: Rom.

What the gifts of a ſacrifice ſignified.

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6.12

6.13. *Give your members as weapons of righteouſneſſe unto God, as they that are alive from dead works:* Rom.12.1. *I beſeech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you give up your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God:* this we ought to doe in token of thankfulneſſe for Gods endleſſe mercies: and this we then doe, Firſt, when we acknowledge our ſelves not to be our owne, but Gods in Chriſt: Secondly, when we conſecrate and dedicate our ſelves to the ſervice of God, that both in heart and life we may ſhew our ſelves thankfull for our creation, preſervation, and Redemption ſpecially. But lamentable is the caſe with men in this behalfe: in ſtead of giving themſelves to God, men bequeath themſelves to the Devill, and become his ſlaves and vaſſals; they make their hearts his dwelling place, by malicious, wicked, and luſtfull thoughts; they conſecrate the faculties of their ſoules, with all the parts of their bodies unto him in the practice of ſinne: this ought not to be, ſeeing Chriſt gave himſelfe for us, let us give our ſelves wholly unto him.

Examination of our ſelves before we doe ſervice to God.

And there remembreſt; that is, doeſt call to minde, *that thy brother hath ought againſt thee, &c.* By this Chriſt teacheth us, that whenſoever we come to doe any ſervice unto God, wee ought firſt of all to enter into our owne hearts, and there to ſearch and try our owne eſtate, in reſpect of offences given to God or man, whereof we have not repented, that ſo before we come to Gods ſolemne worſhip, we may be reconciled both to God, and to our brethren. The want of this, brings many a curſe upon mens ſoules, even in the meanes wherein they thinke to receive Gods bleſſing: and therefore we muſt looke to the practice of this dutie, that we doe it ſpeedily, and from our hearts. This wee had need to looke unto in reſpect of God whom we daily offend: for if hee have ought againſt us, and yet wee ſtand out againſt him by impenitencie, who can ſave us from his wrath? Let us thinke on *Elies* ſpeech, [z] *If one man ſinne againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge it: but if a man ſinne againſt the Lord, who will pleade for him?*

z 1 Sam.2.25.

v. 25 *Agree with thine Adverſarie quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him, leſt thine Adverſarie deliver thee to the Judge, & the Judge deliver thee to the Serjeant, and thou be caſt into priſon.*

26 *Verily, I ſay unto thee, thou ſhalt not come out thence, till thou haſt payed*

Matth.5. v.25,26.

A *the uttermoſt farthing.*

Our Saviour ſtill goeth on with his former Rule of concord and Reconciliation. Now becauſe the meaning of the words are controverſall, it ſhall not be amiſſe ſomewhat to diſcuſſe the divers expoſitions that are made hereof. The Papiſts ſay, that by *Adverſarie* is meant *God*, commanding men in his Law; and *by way*, is meant the ſpace of time in this life: by *Judge*, they underſtand Chriſt: by *Serjeant*, Gods Angels: by *priſon*, hell: and becauſe in hell there be many places, therefore here by *priſon*, they underſtand Purgatorie: and by *the uttermoſt farthing*, veniall ſinnes: as if this were the meaning; Agree with God while thou art in this life betweene this and the day of Judgement, B leſt thou come before Chriſt, and hee cauſe his Angels to caſt thee into Purgatorie, and there thou remaine till thou have ſatiſfied for thy leaſt veniall ſinnes. This expoſition they ſtand upon the more, becauſe hereupon they would build their doctrine of Purgatorie.

Bellarm. de purgat. lib.1. cap 4.

The confutation.

But this cannot bee the true meaning of this place, for the reaſons following: Firſt, theſe words depend upon the former, and are a continuance of the rule of Reconciliation between man and man, and not betweene God and man. Secondly, their expoſition overthrowth the mediation and ſatiſfaction of Chriſt for man to God: for if (as they ſay) man may and muſt ſatiſfie for his veniall ſins, even to the C uttermoſt, then Chriſt did not make a perfect ſatiſfaction for man to God: for if he did, why ſhould man ſatiſfie for himſelfe? Thirdly, by this expoſition they confound the Adverſarie and the Judge (for the Father and the Sonne are one) which in the Text are made diverſe and diſtinct. Fourthly, they make a Redemption and deliverie from hell, from which indeed there is no redemption. And laſtly, in making a parable of this place, they ſet their Purgatorie on a ſandy foundation: for from the words of a parable can no ſound collection be made, but only from the maine ſcope thereof.

Others there bee, that underſtand theſe two verſes of the partie offended: for (ſay they) Chriſt had ſhewed before the duty of the party D offending, *to ſeeke reconciliation*: now therefore hee layeth down the dutie of the partie offended and wronged, namely, that when the partie offending comes unto him, and deſires reconciliation, he muſt agree and bee reconciled with him quickly. This expoſition, howſoever it is plauſible and fit in reaſon, yet it cannot well ſtand with the words of the Text, which threaten to the partie that agrees not with his adverſarie betimes, *to bee carried before the Judge, and caſt into priſon, there to lye till hee have payed the uttermoſt farthing*: but there is no reaſon why the partie offended ſhould thus be caſt into priſon, and therefore it cannot be underſtood of him.

Thirdly, others expound theſe words, to be

a parable, borrowed from the Courts of the Jewes; and hard it is to ſay, whether they bee the words of a parable or not.

The true expoſition.

But to leave all theſe, A fourth Expoſition, which I take moſt fit and proper to expreſſe the true meaning of the place, is this: The words containe no parable, but are literally and properly to be underſtood: for Chriſt had before exhorted the partie doing wrong, to ſeek to be reconciled with his brother, by acknowledging of his offence, and making recompence according to the injurie offered. But becauſe men are obſtinate and ſtiffe-necked, and will not yeeld and ſubmit themſelves to this dutie; therefore hee further urgeth the partie offending, to the ſpeedy performance of this dutie; by the danger enſuing upon the neglect hereof; ſaying, *Agree with thine adverſarie, &c.*] that is, uſe meanes to become friends with him, with whom thou art at variance, (for an *adverſarie* doth not here ſignifie an open enemie, but any one, with whom we are at difference, who hath an action againſt us in any matter by reaſon of our injurie done unto him.) *Quickly*] that is, without delay, ſtand not upon thy ſuppoſed right, but rather yeeld from thine owne right, than over-long to deferre to be reconciled. *Whiles thou art in the way*] that is, (as wee may plainly ſee, Luk. 12. 58.) while thou art going with thine Adverſarie to have the matter tried before the Magiſtrate. *Leſt thine Adverſarie deliver thee to the Judge*] That is, leſt thine adverſarie having a good action againſt thee, doe convince and caſt thee, before the Magiſtrate. *And the Judge deliver thee to the Serjeant, and thou be caſt into priſon.*] That is, leſt after thou art convinced of wrong doing, the Judge command the Serjeant to caſt thee into priſon. And becauſe it might be thought a ſmall thing, to be caſt into priſon, for that he might quickly come out againe, therefore our Saviour Chriſt addeth in the laſt place, *Verily, thou ſhalt not come out, till thou haſt payed the uttermoſt farthing*: this *farthing*, was the leaſt coyne uſed among the Jewes, called a *quadrin*, which containes two mites; as wee may ſee, [a] *by the widdowes gift caſt into the Treaſurie*; and it is the fourth part of a penny in Engliſh: ſo that this laſt phraſe is proverbiall, as if he had ſaid, Looke for no compounding or agreement with thine adverſarie, when thou art once caſt into priſon, for he will ſhew thee no favour, but uſe thee as hardly as may be, remitting nothing; but cauſing thee to make full reſtitution and ſatiſfaction, even to the uttermoſt farthing. And this I take to be the true and proper meaning of the words.

a Matth.12.42.

The ſpeciall points to bee obſerved in the words are two; a Precept, and a Reaſon thereof: The *Precept* in theſe words, *Agree with thine adverſarie quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him*: that is, uſe all good meanes to become friends with whomſoever thou haſt any wayes offended, before the matter come A to bee tried before the Magiſtrate. The Reaſon is in the words following, drawen from the danger that will enſue deferring of agreement, *leſt thine Adverſarie deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge to the Serjeant, &c.* The Precept is a rehearſall of the Rule of Reconciliation given in the former verſe, touching agreement with thoſe whom wee have offended: which point, Chriſt ſtands the more upon, becauſe of the ſtubbornneſſe of mens hearts, that cannot abide to ſubmit themſelves, either in yeelding a little of their owne right, or making ſatiſfaction for wrong done to others. Now this precept is further ſet out, by theſe two circumſtances; Firſt, of the *time*, it muſt be done quickly, and not deferred upon any pretence or ſhew of our owne right: Secondly, of the *place*, in the way, as we goe to the Court.

B

How to preſerve peace.

In this Precept, our Saviour Chriſt gives unto us a notable Rule of equanimitie, for the maintenance of peace and love, with thoſe with whom wee are to deale in the private affaires of our ſpeciall callings: namely, *to deale moderately*, if the matter concerne our ſelves, without all rigour or extremitie; unleſſe our place bee ſuch, wherein our ſilence may impeach the glorie of God, or the good of his Church, Phil.4.5. *Let your patient minde be knowen unto all men.*

Rules.

To the practice of this Rule, many duties are required: Firſt, we muſt conſtrue all mens ſayings and doings in the beſt part; herein they failed, that bare falſe witneſſe againſt our Saviour Chriſt, by applying his ſpeech to the [b] *materiall Temple in Ieruſalem*, which he ſpake of the Temple of his body. This miſtaking and miſconſtruing of mens ſayings and doings, is the cauſe of much debate continually. Secondly, we muſt learne to beare with, and to winke at our brothers wants, Prov.9.11. *It is the glorie of a man to paſſe by an offence*: if the ſame only concerne us, and bee not derogatorie to Gods glorie; as if he be froward, haſtie, angrie, reproachfull, and ſo forth; we muſt in Chriſtian patience paſſe by the ſame, as though we tooke no notice of it, till by our reproofe we may doe him good. Thirdly, though direct injurie bee done unto us, yet if the ſame bee private, and doe not impeach the glorie of God, or our life, or C good name, wee muſt bee content to beare it: 1 Cor. 6. 7. *Paul* doth ſharply rebuke the Corinthians, for going to law about trifles; *Why rather* (ſaith he) *ſuffer you not wrong? why ſuſtaine you not harmes?* And this by Gods grace a man ſhall doe, if firſt, hee duly and equally conſider his owne deſerts, both of like injuries from men, and of eternall damnation from God himſelfe, whom he continually offendeth. Secondly, if hee have an eye to the providence of God, in that thing wherein hee is wronged, which diſpoſeth all things for the good of his children. Fourthly, for the maintenance of peace we muſt yeeld of our owne right: ſo did [c] *Abraham* unto *Lot* though hee were above him both in yeares and authoritie, bidding him

b Matth.26. 60,61.

2

3

4

c Gen.13.9.

chuſe

chuse where hee would dwell, whether on the right hand, or on the left: and out Saviour Christ, though he were free, being of the Kings stocke, yet *for the* [g] *avoiding of offence, paid tribute for himselfe and Peter.* And observing these things with good conscience, we shall by Gods grace maintaine Christian concord.

[g] Matthe. 17. 26.

Secondly, Christ commanding speedy agreement, condemneth that wilfulnesse and stubbornesse of men, whereby, rather than they will submit themselves, and yeeld a little of their right, they will carrie everie trifling matter before the Magistrate. This is a common fault among us in these dayes of peace, for everie trifle is made a Law-matter, which ought not to be among Christians; it plainly argueth great want of love, and small regard of this Commandement of our Saviour Christ. I speak not this, to condemne the lawfull use of the Law, but to reprove the bad practice of carnall men, who make lawing the meanes of their private revenge, and sometime of flat injustice against their brethren, whom they doe not affect.

[h] Wrangling for trifles.

Mens naturall malice.

Thirdly, Christ here also noteth out the hardnesse and cruelties of mens hearts, who will never let a man goe, if once they get him in the lurch: such cruell wretches are they that take the forfeitures of leases, bonds, and obligations: and such, for the most part, are our common usurers: but all these must know, that they are void of love and grace, whereby they should maintaine this concord, which Christ requires.

Heart-burning is fruit unlawfull.

Fourthly, by this circumstance of time, [*Agree quickly*] Christ would teach us to keepe our hearts cleare from grudging and heart-burning, even then, when we have occasion of suit or controversie with others; for this rancor of heart will cause further debate and contention, like to an angrie humour in the veines, which fets the whole body in burning fits.

Reconciliation with God must be sought betime.

Fifthly, if we must use speed in seeking agreement with men whom wee have offended, before we come to the triall of a mortall Judge; then much more must wee give all diligence to bee reconciled unto God, for our daily sinnes, whereby wee offend him; and that with all speed, even in this life, before wee come to his Tribunall seat: for howsoever in the courts of men we may goe upon sureties, yet at the barre of Gods Judgement, none can answer for us. If wee bee for before-hand reconciled to God in Christ, this undoubtedly will be the issue; we shall be cast into utter darknesse, and there remaine till wee have fully satisfied the Justice of God, which will never bee. Let all estates and degrees thinke on this, and especially the younger sort, who deceive themselves by deferring repentance, when as indeed, they as well as others, are everie day going forward to the bar of Gods judgement.

Vse speedily well doing.

Sixthly, as in seeking Reconciliation, so in doing everie good worke that concernes Gods glorie in the good of others, wee must use all convenient speed; [c] *while we have time we must doe what good we can unto all,* for death and the last judgement come suddenly: *Say not to thy neighbour,* (saith [f] *Salomon*) *goe, and come again to morrow, if thou hast it now.* And again, Eccles. 9. 10. *What soever thy hand shall finde to doe, doe it with all thy power.* This is *Iobs* defence, [g] *that hee restramed not the poore of their desire, nor caused the widdowes eyes to faile:* and his practice must bee our president, for the more good we doe, the more grace we have, and the liker we be to our [h] *heavenly father.*

[c] Gal. 6. 10.

[f] Prov. 3. 28.

[g] Iob 31. 16.

[h] Matth. 5. 44. 45.

Thus much of the Precept: The Reason followeth, *Least thine adversarie deliver thee to the Judge, &c.* which is thus much in effect, If thou shew extremitie, thou shalt finde extremitie shewed unto thee againe, even by the Magistrate. They that deale stiffely and rigorously, shall bee rewarded in their kinde: God in his just judgement will have men measured unto, as they measure unto others, Matth. 7. 2, 6. Mark. 4. 24.

Magistrates approved.

Here then wee are taught to deale in equitie and moderation with all men, in the private affaires of our callings, even as we would have them to deale with us; and then God will cause others to deale well with us: but if we deale ill with others, God will reward us in the same kind. This point all Usurers, Ingrossers, Tradesmen, &c. should well observe, who thinke they may doe with their owne, what they will; but we must know, we are but Stewards, and our account will be exact.

Secondly, here wee see Christ alloweth of the Magistrate, and his Judgement seat: 2. Of his proceeding against the guiltie, in delivering him to the Officer: 3. Of the office of the Serjeant: 4. Of casting guiltie persons into prison: 5. Of suing at the Law, when right cannot be gotten by any other lawfull meanes; but Law must not be the first course we take in seeking our right, wee must rather suffer some wrong, and seeke to end the matter by friends: and use law, as Physitians use poysons, when gentle physicke will not serve the turne, then in case of extremitie they doe minister stronger physicke; yea, sometime poyson it selfe: so when we cannot otherwise procure our peace and right, then we may lawfully take the benefit of the Law.

v. 27 *Yee have heard that it hath beene said of old time, Thou shalt not commit adulterie.*

Here our Saviour Christ goeth about to restore the seventh Commandement, touching *Adulterie*, to his true sense and meaning, and so to his proper and right use, by purging it from the false and erroneous interpretation of the Jewes: for which end, he first layes downe the false interpretation of the Scribes and Pharisees,

risses, verse 27. and then adjoyneth the true sense thereof, verse 28. especially; yet so, as he continueth the same in the verses following.

For the first; before the interpretation of the Jewes Teachers, hee prefixeth this Preface; *Yee have heard that it hath beene said of old time*; or, *of the ancient Teachers*: the meaning and use whereof, wee have before shewed, verse 21. Then after follow the words of the seventh Commandement, *Thou shalt not commit adulterie*; which are the proper words of the Holy Ghost: yet here must not they be taken in that sense which the Scribes and Pharises gave unto them: for the better conceiving whereof, this one thing especially must be opened; namely, what is Adulterie here forbidden. *Adulterie* properly, is the breach of wedlocke by such parties, some one whereof, at the least, is either married, or espoused: I call it *the breach of wedlocke*, to note the propertie of this sinne, which is not in any other sinne, unlesse it be of this kinde, though the sinne be far more grievous. Idolatrie is a more heinous sin than Adulterie, being a breach both of the first and second Commandement of the first Table; and yet it comes short of Adulterie, in this qualitie of breaking wedlocke: for wedlocke may bee kept of those which are Idolaters. Secondly, I say, *betweene any parties, if one bee married*; meaning the husband as well as the wife, to confute the opinion of some Jewes, and by somes lawes also maintained, that the man hath a privilege above the woman, so as he breaketh not wedlocke, when hee goeth in to another woman, besides his wife; which is false: for though he have a prerogative over his wife, in being her head, yet he hath no privilege to free him from mattimoniall fidelitie, but is as much bound to keepe himselfe unto his wife, as she is to keepe her selfe to him. The prehemi-nence of superioritie cannot free the husband from the bond of marriage, the husband is bound to the wife, as much as the wife is to the husband, and she hath power over his body, as much as he hath over hers, 1 Cor. 7. 4. Thirdly, I say, *or espoused*, because adulterie is not only committed by such parties, whereof one or both bee fully married; but also by them, whereof one is single, and the other contracted only; and therefore is the same [a] punishment allotted to both; for contract in right is marriage. Thus wee see the sinne here directly forbidden, according to the letter of the Law. Now, though the Lord under this one includes all the sinnes of the same kinde, as wee shall anon perceive; yet the Pharises tooke this literall signification for the whole meaning, and taught that the sinne here forbidden, was bodily adulterie only; and so made the adulterie of the heart to be no adulterie; which exposition Christ here confutes.

Adulterie.

[a] Deut. 22. 22, 23, 24.

The Vse. Fraud in expounding Scripture.

First, here observe the fraud and cunning of these Pharises; they would seeme faithfull Interpreters of the Law, in that they keepe themselves so close to the words, that they will not passe one jot beyond the literall sense: but yet in the meane time they omit the full meaning and true use of the Law. The like hath been the practice of heretickes in all ages; as the Arians who denied that Christ was God, stucke fast to these words of Scripture, [b] *the Father is greater than I*, and to such like. And the Papists to uphold their breaden-God, by transsubstantiation, will needs keepe the literall sense of these words of Christ, *This is my body*, whereby they overturne the nature of that Sacrament. And the like might be shewed by sundrie examples in all ages; whereby wee are taught, not to stand upon the proprietie of the words of Scripture only, but to labour to have the true spirituall sense joyned with them.

[b] Joh. 14. 21.

Rhem. Mat. 26. sect. 8, 9.

Adulterie a grievous sin.

Secondly, here observe how grievous a sinne Adulterie is, in that Christ by name doth expressly forbid it, among all the sinnes of this kinde; yea, the verie Pharises doe everie where condemne it: for though they would easily dispense with [c] *disobedience to Parents*; yet the woman taken in adulterie must be put to death, Joh. 8. 4 5. The greatnesse of this sin might be shewed by many arguments; for if he be [d] *worse than an Infidell, that careth not for his family*, then farre worse is the Adulterer, for hee destroyeth his family. *Salomon* [e] (we know) *maketh Adulterie worse than theft*, and yet theft is a notorious sinne, greatly hated, and severely punished of all nations. Again; Adulterie destroyeth the Seminarie of the Church, which is [f] *a godly seed* in the family, and it breaketh the covenant betweene the parties and God, it robs another of the precious ornament of chastitie, which is a gift of the Holy Ghost, it dishonoureth their bodies, and maketh them the temples of the Devill, and the Adulterer maketh his family a Stewes: for as *David* dealt with *Vrias*, so his owne sonne *Absalon* dealt with him: and lastly, it bringeth Gods vengeance upon the posteritie: and therefore *Iob* calleth it [g] *a fire which shall devoure unto destruction*: yea, the greatnesse of Gods punishment upon adulterers, partly in this life, and principally after death, may plainly shew the greatnesse of this sinne: for this and other sinnes, God overthrew [h] *Admah and Zeboim, Sodome and Gomorrah, with fire and brimstone from heaven*: and the place where they stood, is made a poole of poisoning water unto this day. And although the Lord doe not shew such extraordinarie revenge against sinne, yet his wrath is a consuming fire against whole families, townes, and kingdomes for this sinne: though *David* repented of his Adulterie, yet for that verie sinne, *the sword* [i] *must not depart from his house for ever.* And for the life to come, [k] *Adulterers, and whoremongers God will judge.* Again, [l] *Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, &c. shall inherit the kingdome of God*: they may repent, and so bee saved, but then they cease to be Adulterers.

[c] Matth. 15. 4, 5, 6.

[d] 1 Tim. 5. 8.

[e] Prov. 7. 30, 32.

[f] Mal. 2. 15.

[g] Iob 31. 12.

[h] Deut. 29. 23.

[i] 2 Sam. 12.

[k] Heb. 13. 4.

[l] 1 Cor. 6. 9.

Now if Adulterie bee so grievous a sinne, worse

wonder than theft, &c. then wee must wish that in all places, it were as severely punished as theft is; so would families be reformed, and become good Seminaries, both for Church and Common-wealth. Secondly, the grievousnesse of Gods wrath against this sinne, must admonish every one to beware thereof, for it brings the besome of destruction to sweepe all away, both in Church and Common-wealth.

v. 28 *But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adulterie with her already in his heart.*

Here our Saviour Christ layes downe the true sense of this Commandement, and as wee see, he speaketh as the Law-giver and Prophet of his Church, who hath absolute power to give lawes, and expound the same. *But I say unto you:* The Pharises said there was no adulterie, but that which was outward and bodily; but Christ plainly confuteth that, and saith, *he that looketh on a woman to lust after her:* that is, either in looking on her, lusteth, or by looking, lusteth after her; that is, desireth to increase his lust: *hee hath committed adulterie with her already in his heart.* Here then our Saviour Christ setteth downe two things touching the interpretation of this Law: First, the *occasion* of adulterie, which is *looking to lust.* Secondly, that the lust of the heart, that is, the motion and inward inclination of the heart unto this sinne, is *adulterie before God,* though it never come into action.

For the occasion: To looke upon a woman, is not sinne, but may bee done lawfully; yea, thereby a man or woman may glorifie God, as the *Queene of Sheba*, by beholding [a] *Salomons* person, and hearing his wisdome, did take occasion to glorifie God: but here is meant the abuse of the sight; that is the idle looking, or curious looking of men upon women, or women upon men. Now idle looking is when one looketh without just cause; as when a man looketh with intent to lust: Thus did *the sonnes of God behold the daughters of men,* Genes. 6. 2. by whose looking came lust, and for lust came the flood: so *Potiphers* wife [b] first, *lift up her eyes upon Ioseph,* and *then lusted after him:* and *Dina* [c] *Iacobs* daughter, went out to see the daughters of the country, and to bee seene againe, and so when *Sheechem* saw her, he lusted after her, and ravished her: so the Prophet *David* [d] living in peace and security, cast his eye idly and curiously upon *Bathsheba*, as she was washing her selfe, whereupon he lusted after her and so committed both adulterie and murther. This idle and curious looking, Saint *Peter* calleth [e] *an adulterous eye,* both because it is the beginner of lust, and the increaser thereof. But this sinne is little regarded, and made a small matter with many, who can bee content to come with Christian eares into the assemblies, and yet will bring with them idle and curious, yea adulterous eyes: but such persons which so abuse their sight, to the dishonour of God, must know that they are adulterers before God: and howsoever they may perswade themselves, that grace enters into their hearts by hearing, yet undoubtedly by their idle curious eyes, Satan enters into their soule, and keepes out Gods Word, whereby the soule should bee renued. Wee therefore must here be admonished, to take heed how we use the sight of our eyes, especially when wee are in the assemblies of the Saints, and holy exercises: and to prevent this evill, it were to bee wished, that men and women would sort themselves, and not be mingled in the congregation, unlesse it were the husband with his owne wife. Againe, if the idle and curious eye be the beginning of adulterie, then wee must learne, with care to governe our eyes, as the servants of God have done. *David* prayed the Lord to [f] *keepe his eyes from regarding vanity.* And *Iob*, because hee would avoid unchaste thoughts, [g] *made a covenant with his eyes, not to looke on a maid.*

Now as looking to lust is here forbidden; so by proportion are all other like occasions unto adulterie: as first, reading of unchaste and wanton bookes of love matters, using light and wanton talke. Many are given to these kinds of delights, but they must know, that therein they sinne grievously, for they have not onely a wanton eye, but a lascivious tongue also. Secondly, the acting of all such Plaies and Comedies, the matter whereof, is the representation of the light behaviour of men and women; for therein are idle and curious lookes set forth to the eye, which ought not to bee, being here condemned. Thirdly, the wearing of vaine and light attire, whereby others are provoked to cast their eyes upon them unto lust; for if the light and wanton eye bee condemned, then that which causeth it, is much more condemned. This ought to be regarded; for light and forren attire is a secret profession of an unchaste heart. Fourthly, mixt dancing of men and women in time and measure: for therein is more occasion and provocation unto lust, than by the bare beholding of each other with the eye. Fiftly, evill company: so are the words of the Apostle *Paul* out of an Heathen Poet, [h] *Evill conversings, corrupt good manners:* which may well include that unseemely conversing of men with women, not warranted either by the generall or particular calling. Sixthly, the pampering of the bodie with dainty meats, or strong drinkes; that was the sinne [i] of Sodome: and it is much more an occasion of lust, than the bare sight of the eye. Seventhly, Idlenesse and lazines, in not imploying the body in some honest calling, for thereby also is lust incited.

[a] 1 King. 10. 8.
Idle looking on man or woman.
[b] Gen. 39. 7.
[c] Gen. 34. 1, 2.
[d] 2 Sam. 11. 2, 3.
[e] 2 Pet. 2. 14.
[f] Psal. 119. 37.
[g] Iob 31. 1.
Occasions of adulterie here forbidden.
1
2
3
4
5
[h] 1 Cor. 15. 33. Menander in Thaide.
6
[i] Ezek. 16. 49.
7

And

And thus much of the meaning of this commandement, forbidding all occasions to adulterie under a lustfull eye.

Now considering that a man is guilty of adulterie, that useth occasions thereof; hereby wee may see that wee cannot excuse our selves from the breach of this Law: for though wee be cleane from the bodily outward fact, yet who can say, *My heart is cleane?* who is free from the occasions thereof? as from a wanton eye, vaine apparell, wanton speech, intemperance, and the rest: all which makes us culpable of this sinne: and therefore we must lay our hands upon our mouthes, and condemne our selves of guilt before God: wee must humble our selves, acknowledging our sinnes, and breaches of this commandement: and lastly, wee must take heed of all occasions, that may move or incite us unto lust or wantonnesse.

The second point which our Saviour Christ propoundeth, in the interpretation of this law, is this; that the lust of the heart, though it never come into act, is Adulterie: now that wee may know what our Saviour Christ meaneth by *lust*, sundry points are to be handled: first, how lust can be a sinne, considering it is onely a hidden desire of the heart: secondly, how *lust* can be a sinne of the seventh Commandement, seeing it is forbidden in the tenth: and thirdly, how great a sinne lust is.

Lust is a sinne.

For the first, that lust is a sinne, is thus proved: Gods Law requireth obedience of the whole man, both in soule and body, and in everie part, facultie, and power thereof: *Thou* [k] *shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy strength:* and that obedience which commeth not from the whole man is sinfull. Now when a man conceiveth unchaste thoughts in his heart, then his soule and minde, & his affections, have not done their duty unto God, and so he sinneth in lusting.

Pelagians.

Yet this doctrine was never received of all, but some have still excepted against it, and their principall persons are two: 1. They say, lust is a naturall inclination, desire, and appetite, which was in *Adam* before his fall, and so cannot be a sin. *Ans.* Lust or appetite in the heart, is not simply a sinne: for so it is a naturall desire, which was in our first parents in their integritie: but to lust after that which God forbiddeth, that is the sinne; as for a man to lust after a woman, or a woman after a man, not being man and wife, which wee see here Christ condemneth. 2. They say, God blesseth adulterers and fornicatours in their lust, with the issue of seed in child-bearing, as well as man and wife in lawfull marriage: and therefore it cannot be a sinne. *Ans.* In adultery two things may bee considered: the unlawfull lust of the heart, and the act of generation: now when God gives issue to adulterers and fornicators, it is no approbation of their sinfull lust, but onely a common blessing of naturall generation, which is his owne ordinance by creation: for howsoever God approves not of our sinne, yet hee preserves mans in sinfull works. And thus we see that lust is sinne.

II. Point. How can lust be a sinne of the seventh Commandement, seeing it is directly forbidden in the tenth: for in this briefe decalogue there is no needlesse repetition of any thing? *Ans.* Lust is twofold, either without consent of will; as when unchaste desires come into the minde and heart, and are not entertained of the will, but be speedily checked so soone as they arise; and such lust is forbidden in the tenth commandement: or with consent of will, when a man is willing to entertaine and cherish the unchaste thoughts that come into his minde, though hee never put them into practice: and these are forbidden in the seventh commandement.

Lust of the heart a grievous sinne.

III. Point. The greatnesse of this sinne of lust: This is here expressed by Christ, calling it Adultery before God; as if he should say, Look how great a sinne bodily adulterie is before men, who punish the same with death; even so great and heinous a sinne before God, is the inward unchaste lusting of the heart, whereto a man gives consent of will, though hee never bring it into action; for this hee stands culpable of adultery before God, and shall therefore be condemned, unlesse he repent.

Hows to examine our hearts by the seventh Commandement.

The use of this *Third point is manifold:* First, hereby wee may learne how to examine our selves by this seventh commandement: for our Saviour Christ here teacheth us, that they which willingly retaine unchaste desires with delight, though they never give their bodies to the outward act, are Adulterers before God: and therefore when wee would examine our selves by this commandement, wee must search our hearts, whether we have willingly retained therein any lustfull thoughts: and if we have, wee must know that wee are guilty of Adulterie before God. And because none of us are free from this sinne, it must humble and cast us downe before God as breakers of this Commandement.

Motives against lust.

Secondly, if the lust of the heart be Adulterie before God, then we must with care and diligence learne the Apostle *Pauls* lesson, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *To purge our selves from all uncleannesse both of flesh and spirit:* that is, wee must labour to keep our hearts and minds pure and chaste, as well as our bodies. And to induce us hereunto, consider the reasons following: First, wee all desire to see God, and to know his love in Christ, for our comfort in this life, and salvation for ever: but without *holinesse and* [l] *purity of heart, we can never see God,* nor know the comfort of his love: for when a man desires his minde with unchaste thoughts, hee depriveth himself of the taste of Gods favour, and of the experience of his love. Secondly, consider the state and condition of mans heart, by effectuall calling; it is the dwelling place and Temple of the holy Ghost, (for when a man is in Christ, believeth in Christ by faith, and Christ in him

[k] Matth. 22. 37.
[l] Heb. 12. 14.

by his Spirit:) now then looke as men uſe to trimme up their dwelling houſes, for the receiving of ſome noble gueſt, ſo ought we to keepe our hearts pure and cleane from unchaſte luſts, that they may be fit habitations for the bleſſed Spirit of God; but by unchaſte luſts, we make the heart a ſtable for the devill, and a cage of all uncleane ſpirits. Thirdly, if we ſuffer our hearts
3 now to burne with fleſhly luſt, we make an entrance in them for the burning of hell fire for ever: for theſe two alwaies goe together, burning luſt and hell fire, (unleſſe repentance come betweene.) And therefore if we would eſcape hell fire, wee muſt quench the fire of luſt, and
4 cleanſe our hearts from this uncleannes. Fourthly, by profeſſion we ſeeme to bee the members of Chriſt; and if we would be ſo indeed, then we muſt take heed of unchaſte luſts, for thereby we pull our hearts from Chriſt, and knit them to an harlot. Theſe and ſuch like reaſons muſt move us to avoid all unchaſte deſires: and for the preſervation of chaſtity in our hearts, theſe Rules muſt be obſerved.

1 Rules for the preſervation of chaſtity.

First, the minde muſt bee filled with godly meditations, and the Word of God muſt dwell in our hearts plenteouſly: for unchaſte luſts do therefore ariſe in our hearts, becauſe we are idle minded, and empty of Gods Word: if that were truly ingrafted in us, theſe wicked deſires could not enter, or at leaſt take no place in us. Secondly, wee muſt often give our ſelves to the
2 ſpirituall exercises of faith, repentance, and new obedience; as to the uſuall hearing, reading, and meditating in Gods Word, to the often receiving of the Lords Supper, and to continuall prayers, not only publikely, but privately eſpecially: for theſe confirme Gods graces in the heart, and doe even nip in the head all ungodly motions whatſoever. Thirdly, we muſt
3 uſe ſobriety in meat, drinke, and apparell: for ungodly luſts are kindled, fed, and nourished with too much pampering of the body: Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim ſinned moſt grievouſly in this kind through fulneſſe of bread: and therefore wee muſt uſe moderation in theſe things, that grace may bee ſtrengthened, and all evill luſts weakned in us. Fourthly, we muſt alwaies be doing ſome good thing,
4 either in our generall calling of a Chriſtian, or in our particular calling: yea, in our lawfull recreation wee muſt intend and practiſe good: for when men are idle, Satan fills their hearts with evill thoughts, and ſo defiles the ſame. Fifthly, men and women muſt not privatly converſe together, without warrant ſo to doe, either from their generall, or particular calling,
5 ſo as with good conſcience they can ſay, the Lord doth call them ſo to converſe: for the mutuall converſing of men and women, is the cauſe of many noyſome luſts: and therefore neither men nor women without good warrant, ſhould thruſt themſelves into ſuch occaſion of temptations. Remember what the Apoſtle ſaith, [a] *Evill converſings corrupt good*

a 1 Cor. 15. 33.

A *manners.* The Apoſtle *Peter* felt the ſmart of this boldnes, though in another caſe: for coming to warme himſelfe in *Caiphas* hall, without good warrant ſo to doe, when a fill maid demanded of him, Whether he was not one of Chriſts company, he denied him flatly, an d that with curſing: and ſo many men and women converſing without warrant where they ſhould not, doe fall into many noyſome ſinnes; and when they thinke themſelves moſt ſtrong, then with *Peter* have they greateſt falls.

B **v. 29** *Wherefore if thy right eye cauſe thee to offend, plucke it out, and caſt it from thee: for better it is for thee, that one of thy members periſh, than that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell:*

C **v. 30** *Alſo if thy right hand make thee to offend, cut it off, and caſt it from thee: for better it is for thee, that one of thy members periſh, than that thy whole bodie ſhould bee caſt into hell.*

Scope.

In theſe two verſes, our Saviour Chriſt laieth downe a moſt heavenly inſtruction, for the avoiding of offences: propounding it by way of anſwer to a ſecret objection, which might be framed, by occaſion of his former expoſition of this ſeventh Commandement: for having condemned the Adulterie of the heart, declared by the eye, ſome man might ſay, What ſhall we do with our eyes, if an unchaſte looke be ſo dangerous? Our Saviour Chriſt anſwers, *If thy right eye cauſe thee to offend, plucke it out:* Which words muſt not be taken literally, in their proper ſenſe: for this is a Rule in the expounding of
D Scripture, *That when the literall ſenſe is againſt any Commandement of the Law, then the words muſt not be taken properly.* Now theſe words in their proper ſenſe, do command a breach of the ſixth Commandement, which bindeth every man to preſerve his owne, and his neighbours life; and ſo no man can without ſinne *pull out his eye, or cut off his hand.*

Rules of expounding Scripture.

Expoſition.

By eye then, we are to underſtand: First, the *eye of the body:* yet not that onely, but *any other thing that is deare and precious unto us*; as our eye, even our right eye is. *If it cauſe thee to offend,*] that is, cauſe thee to ſinne, and to faile in the way of obedience unto Gods Commandements. *Plucke it out, and caſt it from thee:*] Theſe words

words are a lofty kind of ſpeech, called *Hyperbole*, whereby thus much is ſignified: Reſtraine and governe it moſt carefully; though it bee to
A our ſight; if not, we may not uſe it.

Paraphraſe.

Secondly, *We muſt make our eyes, not the weapons of any ſinne, but the inſtruments of God, worſhip and ſervice.* This we ſhall doe, if we imploy them thus: 1. In beholding Gods creatures in heaven and earth, that in them we may ſee Gods glory, wiſdome, mercy, power, and providence, and thereby take occaſion to magnifie the Name of God. 2. In beholding Gods judgements very wiſhly and narrowly, that therein we may ſee his juſtice and wrath againſt ſinne, and ſo bee humbled in our ſelves, and
3 terrified from ſinne. 3. In beholding of the Elements of Gods Sacraments, eſpecially the bread and wine in the Lords Supper, which be viſible words, wherein we may ſee our Saviour
B Chriſt, as it were crucified before our eyes. 4. In uſing them as inſtruments of Invocation, by
4 *lifting them up to* [f] *heaven*, to teſtifie the lifting up of our hearts unto God. This uſe of the eyes nature teacheth us; for whereas other creatures have but foure muſcles in their eyes, whereby their eyes are turned round about, man onely above them all hath a fifth muſcle, whereby his eye is turned upward towards heaven. And this which is ſaid for the well ordering of our eyes, muſt bee obſerved in the reſt of the ſenſes, and in all other parts of the body; they muſt all be imployed and ſet a work in obedience to God and continually obſerved, that they become not the weapons of ſinne, but the inſtruments of his glory.

1 Rule. Look to Gods glory.

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f Pſal. 123. 1, 2.

Colomb. l. 5. cap. 9.

Vſe. Guard the ſenſes.

Rules for the eyes.

1

Secondly, this Exhortation of Chriſt, muſt teach us to avoid all the occaſions of every ſinne, though it bee with great loſſe unto our ſelves, in the things of this life. This is the chiefe point that our Saviour Chriſt aymeth at in this place, and therfore it ought with ſpecial regard to be learned, and remembred. Mans nature is like to dry wood, or rowe, which will burne ſo ſoone as fire is put unto it; give a man the leaſt occaſion of any ſin, and he is as ready to commit it, as drie wood is to burne, though thereby he doe as much as in him lyeth, to caſt away his owne ſoule for ever. Looke therefore as Mariners on the Seas, have conſtant and continuall care to avoid both rockes and ſands, whereby they may ſuffer ſhipwracke; ſo muſt wee muſt warily avoid the occaſions of every ſinne. A
D moſt worthy example hereof we have in *Moſes*, who was brought up in *Pharaohs* Court, till he was fourty years old, where he enjoyed all earthly pleaſures and honours that his heart could wiſh; and ſo might have continued if he would, for hee was the adopted Son of *Pharaohs* daughter, but yet *Moſes* left them all, and [g] *choſe rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God in Goſhen, than to enjoy all the pleaſures of Egypt.* And this he did, *Becauſe they were but the pleaſures of ſinne*, which he could not enjoy, unleſſe hee would forſake the true feare and worſhip of God, and all good conſcience: and his example we ought to follow.

Avoid all occaſions of ſinne.

g Heb. 11. 25, 26.

Now that wee may avoid all the occaſions

of sinne, and so put in practice this wholesome precept of our Saviour Christ, I will here intreat of the occasions of sinne, and shew withall, how they may be avoided.

By *occasion of sin*, I meane *any thing that either of it selfe, or by mans abuse, becomes offensive, and provoketh unto sin.* In this large acceptance, *an occasion of sinne* extendeth it selfe, not onely to such things as are evill, but even to things good and commendable in themselves, which by mans abuse, cause transgression against God. *Occasions of sinne* are two-fold: either *given*, or *taken*. An *occasion given* is that thing, either word or action, that is evill in it selfe, the speaking or doing whereof, tirres a man effectually to sinne. *Occasions given* are two-fold: either of one man unto another, or of one man unto himselfe. The occasions whereby one man may provoke another to sinne, are many: I will reduce them unto six heads. The first, is *bad counsell*, whereby one man perswadeth another unto sin. This is a great cause of much evill in the world: thus came the fall of our first parents: for [h] *Satan* perswaded *Eve*, and *Eve* her husband: thus came the crucifying of the Lord of life, for the *high Priests and Rulers perswaded the people to aske Barrabas, and to destroy Iesus.* Hence commeth seeking to wizards: one friend perswades another, for their outward good, as they thinke: yea, from this bad counsell comes the common neglect of all good duties in Gods worship.

Occasion of sinne distributed.

Kinds of occasions: taken.

Men give offence to others sowaies.

1 Bad counsell.

h Gen. 3. 4, 6.

i Mat. 27. 20.

The second is, *consent or approbation of sinne*; and it is two-fold, *secret*, or *open*. *Secret approbation* and consent is, when men see sinne committed, and are not grieved thereat: for this cause the Apostle *Paul* checketh the [k] *Corinthians, that they were not sorrowfull, but rather puffed up at the fact of the incestuous man*: whereby they did in some sort hearten him in his sinnes: this is a great occasion of sinne in our dayes. The Prophet *David* was of another minde, *Mine eyes gushed out rivers of teares, because men brake Gods Lawes. Open approbation of sinne* is, when men doe openly countenance sinners, and lewd persons, which make profession of bad practices: this is a great occasion of horrible impieties: hereby the hands of the wicked are strengthened in their wickednesse, as [m] *the Lord complaineth*: and this is the sinne of this age: for who is so bad, that hath not some patrone of his evill, and some backe friend to sooth him in his sinne, which makes sinne shamelesse, and sinners impudent? But all Gods children must follow *Elisha*, who in great fervency of spirit told *Iehoram* to his face though he were a King, that [n] *If it had not beene for the presence of good King Iehosaphat, he would not have looked towards him, nor seene him*: the *Lord* himselfe will not [o] *take the wicked by the hand*, neither can hee indure that his children should [p] *helpe the wicked, or love them that hate the Lord.*

2 Consent.

k 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

l Psal. 119. 136.

m Ier. 23. 14, 17.

n 2 King. 3. 14.

o Iob. 8. 2.

p 2 Chr. 19. 2.

The third occasion given is, *provocation unto sinne*, when either by word or deed, men excite or draw on others to some evill: as unto anger, revenge, hatred, to drunkennesse, or such like; and this is a common fault of those that delight in drunken fellowship.

Provocation to sinne.

The fourth occasion is, *neglect of good duties unto our brethren*; as of exhortation, admonition, instruction, or rebuke: Iosh. 7. *Achan* stole the execrable thing for himselfe alone, and yet all the people are charged with that fault, and punished for it: the cause was, their neglect to keepe one another from that sinne, according as God commanded them, chap. 6. 18. This is a great occasion of impiety among us; if neighbour would admonish neighbour, and one brother another, sinne would not be so rife as it is. But this duty is not onely neglected of private men one to another, but of publike persons, who are more bound unto it. The Magistrate is negligent in punishing, and the Minister in reproving sinne: and the master of the family careless in reforming those that are under him, which causeth sinne to abound.

4 Neglect of good duties.

The fifth occasion given, is *evill example in the practice of any sinne whatsoever, which may bee knowne*: this is most dangerous, like unto wild fire, that inflameth all places whereon it lighteth. The truth hereof appeares among us: for let any one man or woman take up a new fashion in attire, and presently the same is generally received: let a man invent or sing a lewd song, and presently it is learned of all, even of little children that can scarce speake: whence also comes it, that crawling infants should sweare roundly, and frame themselves to all impietie, when they cannot speake readily, but from the bad example of their Elders, with whom they are brought up? Now among all men, their bad example is most dangerous, who make the greater profession of Religion. They are like false lights upon the shore, which lead the shippes upon the sands. And therefore such as shew any care or frowardnesse in holy practices of religion, must have speciall watch over all their wayes, that (if it be possible) they may bee blamelesse both in word and deed: for all men have an eye at them, and the wicked would gladly spie holes in their coat.

5 Bad example.

The last occasion given is, *the private slandering of Gods Ministers, & the disgracing of their Ministery*: this is an offence as generall as the rest, and it causeth many to contemne the means of their salvation. When men meet together, their common talke is of the Ministers, and of their doctrine, not to be edified by mutuall conference, but onely to disgrace their persons, and to make their ministery contemptible; but they little know what great mischiefe this causeth, and therefore it ought to be avoided.

6 Slandering Gods Ministers.

How to avoid occasions given.

A Rule.

These are occasions of sinning given by one man to another: for the avoiding whereof, which is *the plucking out of the eie, & cutting off the hand* here commanded, this Rule must bee observed; *We must hate and eschew the occasions of*

of sin as deadly poison: and esteeme those persons that give them unto us, in that regard, as ill as the devill. Thus Christ dealt with *Peter* his owne Disciple, when hee went about to hinder him from doing his Fathers will in suffering for our sins; saying, [q] *Come behind me Satan*; considering him in that action, as if he had bin the devill himselfe: for we must know, that the devill comes not openly unto men, but cunningly conveyes himselfe in these occasions of sinne given by others, that thereby he may enter into them for the destruction of their soules: we therefore must endevour as *Paul* did, [r] *To keepe a good conscience in all things*: that is, to keepe our selves pure and uncorrupt from all the occasions of sinne in the world: with a watchfull eye against offences must we walke on, in that way that leadeth unto life, eschewing these stumbling blocks which the Devill casts in our way by other men: and so shall wee obey this good counsell of our Saviour Christ.

q Matth. 16. 23.

r Act. 24. 16.

The second kinde of offences given.

The *second kind of occasions of sinne given*, are those which a man gives unto himselfe: and they arise either from his affections, or from his imagination: from mans affections arise so many occasions of sin, as there be corrupt affections in him; as from corrupt desire ariseth *covetousnesse*, which is so great an occasion of sinne, that the Apostle calls it [s] *The root of all evill.* This drawes mans heart so much to the world, that he can spare no time for the meanes of his salvation; herewith he is so choaked, that hee never thinketh of repentance, till the last gaspe. Such another occasion of sinne, is *pride of heart*, whereby many give themselves so much to the garnishing of their bodies, that they neglect their soules altogether. The like is *selfe-love*, whereby men overweening their gifts, thinke not themselves honoured according to their desert, and so through discontent give themselves to plot and practise much mischiefe, for the advancing of their estate. Of this sort are the Romish Priests and Iesuits, as their manifold dangerous attempts against our Church and State doe evidently declare. And thus wee might runne thorow all the affections of mans heart, shewing that the corrupt motions thereof are the cause of much sinne unto him, and a most dangerous meanes for the ruine of his soule.

Offences arising from a mans covetous affections.

s 1 Tim. 6. 10.

How to avoid offences arising from a mans heart.

In regard whereof here also we must shew, how *this eye may be plucked out, and this hand cut off*: that is, by what meanes may we reforme our hearts, and stay the rage of our affections, that they cause us not to sin. The way is this, *We must mortifie and crucifie our unruly affections and corrupt desires.* And for this end wee must put in practice three duties: *First*, we must beleeve that we are crucified with Christ; that is, as we conceive our selves to bee in Christ by faith, whereby we have communion with him; so we must conceive that this communion with Christ is in his death and buriall, so as our sinfull nature, with all our corrupt affections, were nayled to his crosse and buried in his grave, as the Apostle shewes at large, Rom. 6. 3, 4, &c. Now when this perswasion shall take place in our hearts, it will by Gods grace keepe us from yeelding to corrupt motions and desires, and move us to labour to subdue them daily: for herein stands our assurance that wee have fellowship with Christ, when we have fellowship in his death. And therefore as we see malefactours to cease from stealth and robberie, when they are once hanged; so wee being crucified with Christ in respect of the old man, must not suffer the same to rule in our affections, or to have force in our members: knowing (as the Apostle saith) *that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sinne might be destroied, that henceforth we should not serve sinne*: and, [b] *they that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof*: whereupon he bids us, [c] *thinke that we are dead to sinne*, meaning with Christ, and so cannot live therein: Saint *John* saith, [d] *He that is borne of God, sinneth not, because the seed remaineth in him*: that is, true faith assuring the heart that all the benefits of Christs death and passion belong unto him; whereof this is one, that in our nature hee suffered death upon the crosse, that wee by the power of his sufferings might have sinne crucified in us, so as it should not reigne in us, to bring forth fruits unto death. *Secondly*, we must remember Gods commandement forbidding every sinne, and every wicked lust and affection; and withall we must apply the threatning of his wrath against the same, that thereby our flesh may bee subdued. *Thirdly*, we must strive against our corrupt motions and affections, not giving them liberty to beare sway in us, but ruling them by meditating in the Word of God, and by prayer for strength of grace to overcome them all; dealing with them, as Parents doe with knives, turning the edges of them before they leave them in the hands of their children, least they be hurt therewith: as if our love bee set upon the world, we must labour to set it upon Christ and his righteousnesse; and if our hatred be against our brethren, we must labour to set it upon sinne, and so for every affection, as joy, feare, &c. wee must so keepe them to their right objects, that they may rather further us in well doing, than become in us the occasions of any sinne against God.

Meanes. 1

The second kind of occasions of sinne which a man giveth to himselfe, arise from his *mind and imagination*: And they are many, I will onely note three: The *first* is an inward conceit of perfect knowledge, touching mans duty to God, and the way of his salvation: that this is a common conceit in the hearts of the ignorant especially, may appeare by this common speech of theirs; that they *know as much as any Preacher can teach them*: for the summe of all, say they, is, *to love God above all, and my neighbour as my selfe, and to beleeve to be saved*

Offences arising from mans mind.

1

by Christ: now this they know as well as the best; and hereupon they become contemners of the preaching of the Word, the ordinarie meanes of their salvation, as of a thing needlesse and superfluous. This conceit is common among us, and doth much hurt to many a mans soule.

Remedie. First our knowledge. 1

The way to cut it off is this; the vaine man that is puffed up with this conceit, must *examine himselfe touching his knowledge, whether it be sufficient to salvation*. And for this end hee must make inquiry in himselfe for these two things: *First*, whether he see his owne naturall blindnesse, and whether he be moved thereby to labour for the knowledge of God and of his will: where this is wanting, there is nothing but a vaine conceit of knowledge. *Secondly*, whether his knowledge bee joyned with conversion of heart from sinne unto God; and with reformation of life from evill to good. This change of heart and life goeth with all saving knowledge. Now if these be wanting, (as undoubtedly they are in all vaine persons) then is their knowledge so farre from being saving knowledge, profitable to salvation, that it rather turneth to their deeper condemnation.

2

The second Imagination in man, occasioning him to sinne, is *The persuasion of his strong faith*. The more ignorant sort that want both faith and repentance, will thus bragge of their strong faith; that no evill companie can hurt them, and hereupon they take occasion to live as they list. But that this is a vaine presumption, may hereby appeare; because [a] *true faith purifieth the heart*, and [b] *strengtheneth a man in life to avoid sinne*, yea, *it ministreth sweet comfort towards the time of death*. But usually these men that brag and boast so much of their faith, are corrupt in heart, sinfull in life, and fearefull in their death; many times despairing of Gods mercie: as lamentable experience oft times teacheth.

a Acts 15.9. b 1 John 5.4.

Remedie. Triethy faith. Two waies. 1

The way to cut off this occasion of offence is this; *to make triall in our selves whether our faith be true and sound or not*. This will appeare two waies: First, by the beginnings and degrees of the workes of the Spirit, which goe before a true and lively faith, which be three: first, a true sight of our sinnes, with an apprehension of the wrath of God due for the same: secondly, a true sorrow and griefe of heart for offending God by these our sinnes: and lastly, an hungering and thirsting after the mercie and grace of God in Christ, above all worldly things: where these things are, there is grace; but where these are wanting, there is no true faith, but a vaine presumption. Secondly, faith will appeare by the worke of love: for in love will faith bring forth all the duties of the moraill Law, both to God and man: [c] *faith worketh by love*, and *love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. Now all such persons as stand so much upon the strength of their faith, shall soone finde, if they examine themselves by these

2

c Gal. 5. 5.

A two Rules, that they have nothing in them but a vaine presumption, which will turne to their deeper condemnation, unlesse they repent, and get true faith.

3

The third Imagination causing a man to sinne, is a *thought of security*, whereby he puts farre away the evill day; persuading himselfe that though God will come in judgement against sinne, yet it is farre off. This was the wicked thought of the Jewes, who said, *The* [d] *visions shewed to the Prophets, were of times afarre off, and for many dayes to come*. This conceit is naturally bred in every man, and is the occasion of many foule sinnes: Mat. 24. 48. *The evill servant said in his heart, my master doth deferre his comming, and thereupon he takes occasion to smite his fellowes*, and to live lewdly, Hab. 28. 15. *The wicked say, they have made a covenant with hell and death, and though a scourge run over, and passe through, yet it shall not come at them*. And the ungodly that walke after their owne lusts, say, *Where is the promise of his comming?* And is not this wicked thought rife among us? for God hath now a long time called us to repentance by the preaching of the Gospell, and because it takes no place in our hearts, hee sends upon us his heavy judgements, as plague, famine, rumours of warres; but yet all this hath not caused us to meet the Lord: generally that complaint of the Prophet may be applied unto us, [f] *No man saith, what have I done?* now the cause hereof, is this wicked conceit, whereby we thinke [g] *the evill shall not come nor hasten for us*. In this regard we are like the men of the old world, who would not beleeve *Noah* though hee preached unto them both by word and deed; *and so they knew nothing till the flood came and tooke them all away*: so fearefull is it to put away from us the threatnings of Gods judgements. And yet this sinne takes place not onely in the ignorant, but many times in the hearts of Gods children.

d Ezech. 12. 27.

e 2 Pet. 3. 3,4.

f Ier. 8. 6.

g Amos 9. 10.

Remedie.

The way to remove this wicked conceit is, *to esteeme of every present day, as the day of our death, or of the last judgement; and so accordingly, to prepare our selves to dye, and to meet God in judgement every day*. This thing *Moses* aimed at, when he prayed God [h] *to teach him and his people so to number their dayes, that they might apply their hearts unto wisdome*: for this persuasion of long life, moves many to give themselves to the sinnes and vanities of this world excessively: wee must therefore shake off this vaine persuasion, and every day prepare our selves for death, and for the day of judgement; so shall wee number our dayes aright, and apply our hearts unto wisdome: for this is true wisdome in man, *rightly to consider his latter end*. And the more neere doth this duty concerne us, because of the continued intercourse of Gods judgements upon us, in famine, plague and pestilence, &c. which plainely argues, that more heavy judgements are to ensue, unlesse wee prevent the fame by speedie

h Psal. 90. 12.

speedie and true repentance.

Offences taken.

Foure heads from whence offences are taken: 1 From Scripture.

Having thus shewed, what be the occasions given whereby men are drawen to sinne, I come to *occasions taken*. An *occasion of sinne, or an offence taken is, when a man of a good thing frames that unto himselfe which causeth him to sinne against God: and so much as in him lieth, to cast away his owne soule*. These occasions taken, arise especially from foure heads: First, from the Scripture: secondly, from the doctrine of the Church drawen out of Scripture: thirdly, from the state of the Church: and fourthly, from the state of the wicked. For the first: though the word of God be most perfect every way, both for matter and style, yet hence doe many take offence, and that two waies principally, partly from the plainnesse and simplicitie of the Scripture, and partly from the contents thereof. For the first, it is most true, that the Scripture style and phrase in many things, is plain and familiar, even to the capacitie of the simple; yet this is no disgrace to Scripture, but rather an honour, which more setteth out the Majestie of Gods word. And yet hereby many take occasion to contemne it, esteeming the studie of Scripture too base and shallow, and the knowledge thereof too plaine and familiar for their fine wits; whereupon some give themselves to other studies and courses, which might glorifie God in this calling. Others also, though they addict themselves unto Divinitie, yet they more imploy themselves in the writings of men for their private studies, than in the word of God; and in their publike Ministerie, they more affect the ostentation of humane wit, eloquence, and learning, in multiplicitie of reading, and set words and phrases, in divers languages, than that plaine evidence of the Spirit, which the Apostle [a] *Paul* so much commends. This also is a great fault in many hearers, that they are more delighted with the vaine conceits of men in preaching, than with the pure and plaine word of God, counting basely of that Sermon wherein the Prophets and Apostles are only quoted, but highly advancing that Sermon for deepe learning which is stuffed with Fathers, Schoolemen, Poets, and such like.

2 From the plainnesse of it.

a 2 Cor. 2. 4.

To cut off this offence: First, the will of God must bee considered, for the penning and preaching of his Word, in plaine and simple manner: for herein is that true, [b] *that God hath chosen such things, as to the world are foolish, weake, vile, and despised, to confound and bring to nought the wise and mightie things of the world*: and hereby also it is made evident, that [c] *the faith of Gods elect, doth not consist in the wisdome of men, but in the power of God*: againe, the preaching of the Gospell, [d] *with the wisdome of words, makes the crosse of Christ of none effect*: let no man therefore deceive himselfe, for [e] *the foolishnesse of God is wiser than men, and the weakenesse of God stronger than men*. Againe, hee that doth exercise himselfe in the word of God either privately or publikly, must

b 1 Cor. 1 27,28.

c 1 Cor. 2. 5.

d 1 Cor. 1. 17.

e vers. 25.

A must labour thereby to see his owne sins, and Gods heavy judgement due unto him for them; and so will he begin to reverence Gods Word, as the onely meanes of true comfort. The woman of [f] *Samaria* at the first became to cavill with Christ, when shee heard him talke of *the water of life*: but to soone as hee discovered her sinne to her conscience, telling her [g] *shee had had five husbands, and hee whom shee now had, was not her husband*: then shee left off to cavill, and [h] *honoured him* by beleeving his Word, and *causing others to come and to beleeve in him*. The Jewes made [i] *light of the giving of the holy Ghost* unto the Apostles at the first; but when *Peter* had [k] *pricked their hearts*, they sought unto the Word, and received it with gladnesse: so the *Jayler*, though over night he dealt unkindely with the Apostles [l] *putting their feet in the stocks in the dungeon*; yet being stricken with a feare, by the opening of the prison doores, *he then fell downe before them trembling, and asked what hee might doe to be saved*.

f Joh. 4. 11,12.

g vers. 18.

h vers. 39. &c. 29.

i Act. 2. 12,13.

k vers. 36, 37, 41.

B

l Act. 16. 26

vers. 30.

Secondly, others take occasion of offence from the *contents of the Bible*; as when they reade of the Miracles wrought by the Prophets, by Christ and his Apostles; they say, the like may be done by Magicke, and so blasphemoully doe father upon the Scripture that most wicked practice of sorcery; like to the malicious Jewes, who said of Christ, that hee cast *out devils by the power of Beelzebub*, Luke 11. 15. Others deny the History of *Moses* to be true, by reason of *Noahs* Arke, which (they say) as it is described for quantity could not containe a couple of every kinde of creatures, with provision and fodder for them, for a whole yeares space: of this opinon was *Apelles* an ancient heretieke in the primitive Church: and many upon this occasion have become Atheists, denying the truth of Gods Word to their damnation. To these I answer; first, for the Miracles, that no creature, men, or Angels, is able to doe such workes, as are recorded in Scripture, to be done by the power of God: Joh. 9. *Christ opened the eyes of one that was borne blind*. The devill by his skill, and man by Art can doe much in curing blindnesse, cast'd by wounds and diseases, but no power of Nature, nor of magicke, no not all the power of all Angels, is sufficient to procure sight to one that was borne blind; that must be done by a power creating, which is in no creature. Againe, as Histories record, the devill is able to enter into a dead body, and cast it to move, and can speake in it; but to raise up one to life that had beene dead foure dayes, as [m] *Christ did Lazarus*, is a worke that all the devils in hell, nay all the Angels in heaven, are not able to doe. And for *Apelles* the heretieke, who tooke occasion from *Noahs* Arke to condemne the bookes of *Moses*: the answer made to him in the Primitive Church may serve the turne: to wit, that it was in quantity sufficient to containe

C

2 Offence taken from the contents of Scripture.

m Joh. 12. 43, 44

Origen. hom. 2. in Gen. de fabrica arcen.

taine couples of all kinds of creatures, and
provision for them for a whole yeares ſpace:
for to omit the heighth and breadth of it it was
n *three hundred cubits long*, and every cubit
(according to the ancient meaſure) contained
nine foot, which in all came to the length of
halfe a mile and more. Againe, others ſay that
though every cubit had bin but one foot and an
halfe long (as our cubits are) yet having o *three*
loſts, it was of ſufficient bigneſſe to containe all
kinds of creatures by couples, and provision
for them for a yeares ſpace. But yet put the
caſe that we could not tell, how an Arke ſhould
be made great enough, to containe couples of
all kinds of creatures, and proviſion for them:
ſhould wee thereupon take occaſion to con-
demne the books of God that record the ſame,
and the thing it ſelfe? God forbid: nay ra-
ther, wee muſt hereby learne to acknowledge
and confeſſe our owne blindneſſe, and the ſha-
low reach of our underſtanding, and ſo admire
the wonderfull worke of God.

Remedy. 1 Rule.

The way to cut off this occaſion of of-
fence, taken from the Scripture, is, firſt to ob-
ſerve, *that (howſoever nothing is more repugnant*
to our nature: than the word of God) yet the ſame
word of God hath more prevailed with many
mens hearts, to win the ſame unto it, than any
thing in the world beſides could ever doe. Hu-
mane writings are far more plauſible to naturall
men, than the holy Scriptures of God: for the
wiſdome of God in Scripture, is eſteemed *foo-*
liſneſſe to mans naturall reaſon: and yet
who did ever cleave ſo faſt to the writings of
men, as Gods children have done to the Word
of God, for the teſtimonie whereof they have
beene and are content to live and die? This
thing argueth plainly, that there is in Scripture
a divine power: for if it had beene from man,
and againſt his nature, as it is, man would have
condemned it.

2 Rule.

Secondly, this muſt be conſidered, that the
pen-men *of holy Scriptures, both the Prophets*
and Apoſtles, have recorded their owne faults in
penning of it, which plainly argueth that they
were penned by holy men of God, according
to the direction of the holy Ghoſt, and are not
the inventions of politike heads to keepe
men in awe; for then the Authors and pen-men
thereof, would rather have concealed their
owne faults, than have publiſhed the ſame in
their owne workes to their diſcredit. Laſtly,
conſider the ſubject and matter of the whole
Bible, to wit, *Jeſus Chriſt*, who therein hath
profeſſed himſelfe to bee the Sonne of God:
now if Chriſt had not beene very God, and yet
ſhould have taken that honour unto him, then
the like judgements would have befallen him
that befell others for the like offence: for none
ever tooke that honour unto them, who
were not grievouſly puniſhed. As was p *Adam*
in Paradiſe, for ſeeking to bee like unto God:
and *Herod*, for receiving and applying to
himſelfe, the blaſphemous praiſe of the people,

3 Rule.

p Gen. 3. 17, 23.

A crying, b *The voice of God and not of man*: but
howſoever moſt fearefull judgements befell
Gods enemies that thus ſought to rob him
of his honour; yet Chriſts end was glorious
and bleſſed: which may move us to thinke
highly of Scripture, as of the Word of God.

2 Head of offences taken: The doctrine of the Church.

I

From ſuppoſed newneſſe.

The ſecond head from whence offences are
taken, is *the doctrine of the Church grounded on*
the Word of God. The offences hence taken are
manifold: firſt, from a ſuppoſed newneſſe of
our doctrine: this is taken of the Papiſts, and
eſpecially of our owne Recuſants: for they ſay
our doctrine is but of foureſcore yeares conti-
nuance, ſince the daies of *Martin Luther*: vou-
ching alſo that for the ſpace of fourteene hun-
dred yeares, wee cannot bring record of any
B Church that held and profeſſed the doctrine,
which we now teach and held.

Remedy. I

Now for the avoiding of this offence, two
points muſt be remembred: I. that the doctrine
of our Church for the ſubſtance thereof, is
the doctrine of the Prophets and Apoſtles,
Act. 2. 42. the doctrine taught by the Apoſtles
concerning Chriſt, is made the foundation of
the Church, and looke where this doctrine is
rightly held and confeſſed, there it is an infalli-
ble note of a true Church. Againe, the Apoſtles
to juſtifie their doctrine, had recourſe to *Moſes*
and the Prophets, as we may ſee in the Acts of
the Apoſtles in ſundry c places: now the do-
ctrine touching Chriſt held and received in our
Churches, is confirmed by the teſtimonies of
the Prophets and Apoſtles, and therefore for
C ſubſtance and doctrine is theirs. Secondly, wee
muſt know, that for the ground and foundation
of Religion, our Churches agree with the Chur-
ches after Chriſt, which continued for the ſpace
of ſix hundred yeares: for wee doe not onely
allow of the Apoſtles Creed, but of the foure
generall Councels, and of their confeſſions
and Creeds, and that in the ſame manner and
ſenſe which they did; ſo as the religion of our
Church is unjuſtly ſlandered to be new.

2

2 Prom ſuppoſed ſtrictneſſe.

The ſecond offence taken from the doctrine
of our Church, is from the ſuppoſed ſtrictneſſe
and rigour thereof: wee teach indeed, that a
Chriſtian man muſt wholly deny himſelfe, his
owne will and deſires, and reſigne himſelfe
wholly unto Chriſt, to be guided by his Spirit,
D according to the direction of his Word. Now
hence ſome would gather, that our doctrine
permits not a man to laugh, or be merry, or to
doe any thing for his owne delight; and here-
upon they grow to contempt of Religion,
counting the profeſſion and practice thereof
preciſeneſſe; and therefore will not bee bound
unto it, but live as they liſt: and this is common
among us.

Remedy. I

The way to cut off this occaſion of offence
is twofold: 1. wee muſt know, that by the
doctrine of our Church, *it is lawfull for a man*
to be merry, ſo it be in the Lord: Phil. 4. 4. *Re-*
joyce in the Lord alway (ſaith the Apoſtle,) *a-*
gaine I ſay rejoyce. Pſal. 104. 15. *God cauſeth*
wine

Rule.

b Act. 12. 22, 23.

c Act. 26. 22.

p Gen. 3. 17, 23.

wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oyle
to make his face to ſhine, & bread to ſtrengthen his
heart. Againe, God doth put moſt glorious co-
lours, and delightſome ſmels into the flow-
ers of the field, no doubt for this end that
man might take his delight therein: yea, be-
ſides the skill of muſicke, God hath given to
many a man, a voyce more ſweet and pleaſant
than is the ſound of any muſicall inſtrument,
which were to no end, if a man might not
therewith cheare up his heart in a moderate de-
light: nay, laughter it ſelfe is the gift of nature,
which was in Adam before his fall, and there-
fore is lawfull. But yet I ſay, *mans rejoycing*
muſt be in the Lord, to cut off many abuſes of
delight: for firſt, there be many that cannot be
merrie, but in the practice of ſome ſinne; if there
be a thought of God, or of his word, all their
mirth is quaſht. But wee muſt endevour our
ſelves to to rejoyce, that God may approve
thereof. Againe, I ſay, *in the Lord*; becauſe
ſinne will ſooneſt prevaile with a man; when he
gives himſelfe to delight and pleaſures. This
Job knew well, and therefore while his ſonnes
feaſted each other q *he offered ſacrifices for them*
particularly every day: for (ſaith hee) *it may bee*
my ſons have ſinned and blaſphemed God in their
hearts.

q Iob. 1. 5.

II Rule. Reſignation of our ſelves unto God.

The ſecond way to prevent the taking of
this offence, *is to reſigne our ſelves holy unto*
God, that hee may doe his whole will in us and
upon us; ſo Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples; r *If any*
man will come after mee, let him deny himſelfe,
take up his croſſe, and follow me: this is, wholly
reſigne himſelfe to bee guided by mee: and
Matth. 13. 46. hee that would get the precious
pearle, *muſt ſell all that hee hath, and buy it.*
Rom. 12. 1. Wee are deſired *by the mercies of*
God, to give up our ſelves, both ſoules and bodies
unto God: whereby we may ſee, that wee have
juſt cauſe to bewaile the caſe and condition of
all ſuch, as count religion preciſeneſſe: for they
are like unto *Ananias*, and *Saphyra*, who
brought part of the ſale of their poſſeſſion unto
the Apoſtles, and ſaid it was all: ſo theſe men
looke to bee ſaved by Chriſt, they heare his
Word, and receive his Sacraments, and therein
make as high a profeſſion as any can do: name-
ly, that they will give themſelves wholly to
Chriſt: but when they are out of the aſſemblies,
they ſhew themſelves to have diſſembled with
God: for they practiſe no ſuch thing as they
made ſhew of: and therefore they may juſtly
feare leſt that befall them in their ſoules, which
befell f *Ananias* and *Saphyra* in their bodies, e-
ven *ſudden death*: for they are *liers unto God*
himſelfe.

r Mat. 16. 24.

f Act. 5. 5. 10.

III. Offence taken from the croſſe accompanying the truth.

Thirdly, others take offence at the croſſe,
which accompanies the ſincere profeſſion of
true Religion: many like well of the doctrine of
our Religion, but yet they are loth to embrace
and to profeſſe the ſame, leſt they ſhould bee
reproached for it in the world.

Remedy.

The way to cut off this occaſion of offence is
A this, we muſt remember that *the croſſe endured*
for the Goſpel ſake, eſpecially if we profit by it, is
an infallible marke of a child of God. Heb. 12. 7.
If yee endure chaſtening, God offereth himſelfe
unto you, as unto ſons: for what ſonne is it, whom
the father chaſteneth not? In reaſon wee finde
this to bee true: for ſay that two children bee
fighting in the ſtreet, and there comes a man
who taketh one of them and beateth him, but
the other he lets alone: will not all men ſay, that
the man is father to the child whom he beateth?
even ſo the Lord for our nurtering, will ſend
croſſes upon us, when we embrace the Goſpel:
now if wee ſhall profit by his corrections, and
learne whereby to humble our ſelves under his
mighty hand, then we begin to receive aſſurance
of his fatherly dealing towards us his ſons and
B daughters: and therefore wee muſt bee ſo farre
from being hindered in the courſe of our holy
profeſſion by reproaches and croſſes, that they
muſt bee the meanes to incourage us therein.
Iam. 1. 2, 3.

Offences taken from parte of doctrine. I. O. predeſtination.

As from the doctrine of the Church in ge-
nerall, ſo from the parts thereof, doe many both
learned and ignorant take occaſion of offence;
as firſt, *from the doctrine of Gods predeſtination*,
whereby we teach that God hath decreed the
condemnation of ſome. This doctrine many
doe renounce as a doctrine of cruelty, and
thereupon frame unto themſelves private opi-
nions, which will not ſtand with the Word of
God.

C The way to avoid this occaſion of offence,
is this; Firſt, to grant unto God himſelfe ſo
much in this caſe, as wee will yeeld to mortall
man in the like. Among our ſelves we allow of
this liberty one to another that a man may kill
a fly or a worm, and for his lawfull uſe & plea-
ſure, kill ſheepe, oxen, and other creatures, and
yet be a merciſull man; ſhall we not then allow
unto God, that he may glorifie his name in the
juſt and deſerved condemnation and deſtruction
of his creature? This is leſſe than wee grant
to men, for a worm is ſomething unto man; but
a man is nothing in reſpect of God. Againe, a-
mong our ſelves, in ſomething wee give liber-
tie one to another to doe as wee will, and yet
thinke the action juſt and lawfull; much more
then ought wee to give freedome of will unto
God in all his actions, without conceit of cru-
elty in any one of his workes; for *all his workes*
are done in equity. Secondly, it muſt bee re-
membred, that wee teach not, that God doth
ſimply ordaine ſome men to hell fire: but tou-
ching reprobation, our doctrine is this; that
God hath decreed and purpoſed to glorifie his
name, in the due and deſerved condemnation
of ſome: for in mans reprobation God hath two
actions: Firſt, he decrees to paſſe by ſome men
without ſhewing his eternall mercy unto them,
and only to declare his juſtice upon them; then
after he decrees, when they are by themſelves
fallen into ſinne, to inflict upon them deſerved
condemnation for the ſame.

2 Rule.

Doctrine of Reprobation.

The

The unlearned also, from this doctrine of Predestination, take occasion of most fearefull falling; for thus they reason: If I be predestinate to salvation, I am sure to be saved, let mee doe what I will: and if I bee predestinated to condemnation, I am sure to be condemned, though I live never so godly; for Gods decree changeth not, and therefore I will live as I list. Thus doe desperate persons imbolden themselves to sin, and to cast away their soules.

A *himselfe can do no good, but all goodnes and grace in man comes from God.* Hence our common people take occasion of looseness of life: for tell them that they must repent and beleeve, if they will be saved; their answer is, that they doe it so well as God will give them grace: all goodnesse (say they) must come from God: yea, the wiser sort amongst us will not sticke to lay the fault of their loose life on God, who gives them no more grace. But for the avoiding of this occasion of offence, wee must know; that when we are not able to doe our duties as we ought, and to pray, to repent, and beleeve as God requireth, the fault is in our selves, and not in God: for we were created righteous in Adam, and in him had power and grace to have done whatsoever God required at our hands: but Adam lost this power through his default; and wee in him lost it also: and therefore our inabilitie commeth from our selves. Againe, wee must consider that God gives grace indeed, yet not miraculously in Ale-houses and Tavernes, but then when men use the meanes to come by grace, and doe that which by nature they are able: that is, come and heare the Word attentively, endevouring to beleeve and to obey the same: for though the good usage of the gifts of nature cannot merit any grace, yet ordinarily wee may observe, that in the use of meanes is grace received: Act. 2. 41. *At one sermon there were converted three thousand soules, among the rebellions Iewes:* Act. 16. 14. *Lidia's heart was opened in hearing Paul preach:* and ordinarily men are converted in the means: for *Faith commeth by hearing the Gospell preached,* Rom. 10. 17.

Remedy.

4 Of Justification.

Remedy.

The last point of doctrine, from whence many take occasion of offence, is *The doctrine of Justification by faith alone, without works.* Hence the Papists condemne our Church as an enemy to all good workes: and many hereby take occasion of a lewd life, because good workes must not justifie them before God. Now to cut off this offence, wee must hold and know, that good workes and faith are dis-joined in the worke of our Justification before God; but they are conjoined in the whole course of our lives and conversation, both before God and man. No worke in man but faith is required to his Justification, though in God there bee respect to his owne free mercy, and to Christs merits: but in our lives faith and workes must goe hand in hand together. Now that these may thus bee well distinguished, I shew it plainely: in the fire is both heat and light, yet in the warming of the bodie the heat hath force onely, and not light, though to many other ends it serve necessarily; even so in a child of God are required both faith and workes, but to justifie him faith onely is required, though workes bee necessary thorow his whole life: for they justifie us before men, and winne unto us a testimony of our Justification before God, not onely in our owne hearts, but from the Lord,

1 Generally. Title.

Isa. 38. 5.

Act. 27. 31. verse 24.

2 Of the fall of Adam.

Remedy. 2 Rule.

2 Rule.

3 Of mans inability of himselfe to the good.

The second speciall doctrine of the Church, whereat some take occasion of offence, is *concerning the fall of Adam:* for we teach, that God in some sort decreed his fall: whereupon some object, that we make God the author of sinne considering his decree is unchangeable. Now to prevent this offence, two Rules must be remembred: 1. that Gods will may bee distinguished. It is either *generall,* or *speciall.* Gods *generall will* is that, whereby he willeth that sinne shall be, by his just permission. But *Gods speciall* will is the approving will of God, whereby he taking pleasure in any thing, will have the same done and brought to passe. Now wee say not that God willed Adams fall by his approving will, but only by his permitting will; because it was good in regard of God, that man should fall. 1 I. We must remember, that Gods decree went before Adams fall, only as an antecedent, not as a cause thereof: for the unchangeable decree and will of God takes not away the liberty of mans will, or of the second causes, but only inclineth and ordereth the same as the first and highest cause of all.

B Adam lost this power through his default; and wee in him lost it also: and therefore our inabilitie commeth from our selves. Againe, wee must consider that God gives grace indeed, yet not miraculously in Ale-houses and Tavernes, but then when men use the meanes to come by grace, and doe that which by nature they are able: that is, come and heare the Word attentively, endevouring to beleeve and to obey the same: for though the good usage of the gifts of nature cannot merit any grace, yet ordinarily wee may observe, that in the use of meanes is grace received: Act. 2. 41. *At one sermon there were converted three thousand soules, among the rebellions Iewes:* Act. 16. 14. *Lidia's heart was opened in hearing Paul preach:* and ordinarily men are converted in the means: for *Faith commeth by hearing the Gospell preached,* Rom. 10. 17.

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The third speciall doctrine of the Church, whereat offence is taken, is this, *That man of*

Lord, Iam. 2. 21. and therefore wee must not content our selves with a faith in speculation, void of workes; but within the compasse of our callings, doe what good we can for Gods glory, and the comfort of our brethren.

A kept his Passeover with them: and so did his Apostles, till they saw them of obstinacy and maliciousnesse refuse the grace of God, offered unto them in the ministry of the Gospel. Now their example must teach us, that so long as our Church holdeth Christ, we must esteeme it to be the Church of God, and not for some wants thereof depart from it.

III. Head of offences, from the state of the Church. 1 From the wants in it.

The third head from whence offences are taken, is the state of the Church: first, in regard of *the wants that be in the Church,* and namely in this one Church. Hence sundry men take occasion to condemne our Church as no Church, our Sacraments as no Sacraments, our Ministers as no Ministers, and our people as no Christians; and therefore doe separate themselves from our Church, as being no true member of the Church of God. To prevent this occasion of sinning, three Rules must be observed: First, *that to beleeve and confesse the doctrine of salvation, taught and delivered by the Prophets and Apostles, is an infallible and inseparable note of a true Church of God:* for Gods Church is nothing else but a company of Gods people called by the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles unto the state of salvation. This doctrine is the *seed of regeneration,* whereby men are begotten unto Christ: and it is that *sincere milke* whereby they are fed and nourished unto eternall life. Now I say, that this our Church of England (through Gods mercy) doth maintaine, beleeve, and professe this Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles: for the proofe hereof, let him that doubteth have recourse to *our English confession,* and to a booke intituled, *The Articles of Religion established in the Church of England;* in which are set downe the foundations of Christian Religion, allowed and held by all Evangelicall Churches. And further to shew that this our profession is not in hypocrisie, but in truth; this our Church is ready to maintaine and confirme the same doctrine by the shedding of their bloud, against all foes whatsoever; and this thing indeed hath beene the only cause of all our dissentions with the Church of Rome: whereupon we see there is just cause our Church should be reputed the true Church of God, and a good member of his Catholike Church.

Remedie. I. Rule. A true note of the Church. Gods Church doth bleed.

B *that to beleeve and confesse the doctrine of salvation, taught and delivered by the Prophets and Apostles, is an infallible and inseparable note of a true Church of God:* for Gods Church is nothing else but a company of Gods people called by the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles unto the state of salvation. This doctrine is the *seed of regeneration,* whereby men are begotten unto Christ: and it is that *sincere milke* whereby they are fed and nourished unto eternall life. Now I say, that this our Church of England (through Gods mercy) doth maintaine, beleeve, and professe this Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles: for the proofe hereof, let him that doubteth have recourse to *our English confession,* and to a booke intituled, *The Articles of Religion established in the Church of England;* in which are set downe the foundations of Christian Religion, allowed and held by all Evangelicall Churches. And further to shew that this our profession is not in hypocrisie, but in truth; this our Church is ready to maintaine and confirme the same doctrine by the shedding of their bloud, against all foes whatsoever; and this thing indeed hath beene the only cause of all our dissentions with the Church of Rome: whereupon we see there is just cause our Church should be reputed the true Church of God, and a good member of his Catholike Church.

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II. Rule. Christs practise towards the Church of the Iewes.

Secondly, observe the practice of Christ and his Apostles towards the Church of the Jewes, which in their time without all doubt, was exceedingly corrupt: for the office and place of the high Priest was bought and sold, and thorow ambition and covetousnesse became annuall; yea, there were two high Priests together at one time: all which were against Gods ordinance. Againe, the Scribes and Pharises which were the Doctors of that Church, erred in some fundamentall points of doctrine, teaching Justification by workes: and withall they greatly corrupted the Law of God, both by their doctrine and traditions; and the Temple became a den of theeves: and yet for all this, Christ did not separate from that Church, neither taught his Disciples so to doe: but was present at their sacrifices and assemblies, and

D Christs practise towards the Church of the Iewes. Secondly, observe the practice of Christ and his Apostles towards the Church of the Jewes, which in their time without all doubt, was exceedingly corrupt: for the office and place of the high Priest was bought and sold, and thorow ambition and covetousnesse became annuall; yea, there were two high Priests together at one time: all which were against Gods ordinance. Againe, the Scribes and Pharises which were the Doctors of that Church, erred in some fundamentall points of doctrine, teaching Justification by workes: and withall they greatly corrupted the Law of God, both by their doctrine and traditions; and the Temple became a den of theeves: and yet for all this, Christ did not separate from that Church, neither taught his Disciples so to doe: but was present at their sacrifices and assemblies, and

III. Rule. Reformed Churches, Judgement of our Church.

Thirdly, all the reformed Churches in Europe doe with one consent honour our Church as a true Church of Christ; now their judgement is not slightly to be regarded, but to bee preferred farre before the rash opinions of private men: for the Church hath a gift of discerning in weightie matters; shee can judge of bookes of Scripture, which bee authenticall, which not; shee can judge of Spirits, and of Doctrines; and therefore also can judge what company of men is a true Church, and what is not: and this their judgement also must confirme us in this truth, that this our Church is a true member of Gods Catholike Church. Now whereas some alleage the wants of our Church to make it no Church: *I answer,* though I will not excuse any default in it, wherein it is wanting, to that which Gods Word requireth, but rather desire, that *the righteousnes thereof may breake forth as the light, and salvation thereof as a burning lampe;* yet this may be said in behalfe of our Church, that the wants thereof are not such as doe any way rase the foundation of Religion, or of Gods holy worship, and so cannot make it to cease to bee a true Church, and therefore none ought to separate from it for such wants: and yet this hindreth not, but that Gods servants may in godly manner desire the Reformation of things that bee amiss: for a good Church may be bettered, and we ought to strive after perfection.

Isa. 62. 3.

The second offence taken from the Church, is from the *diversity of opinions that be therein:* for hence many reason thus; learned men be of so many opinions, that we know not what to follow; and therefore we will be of no religion, till the truth bee established by some generall Councell, and all agree in one.

2 Offence, from consciences in the Church.

Remedie. I

For the avoiding of this offence wee must know; that though men differ in sundry opinions in the true Church of God, yet they all agree in the Articles of faith, and in the foundation of Gods worship: their difference is in matters beside the foundation, and therefore it must hinder none from receiving and embracing true religion. Againe, it is Gods will that there should bee diversities of opinions: yea, schismes and heresies in his Church, that men might be proved, whether they hold the truth in sincerity or not; as we may see, 1 Cor. 11. 19. Deut. 13. 1, 2. Now in this case *Ieremias* direction must bee observed, * *Stand in the paths of the waies* (saith he) *and inquire for the old and ancient way:* (that is, the doctrine of the Prophets) *what God saith and commande by them, and by his Apostles, and that we must follow*

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* Ier. 6. 16.

law with all good conſcience. This Chriſt intended, when hee bade the Jewes to [b] ſearch the Scriptures which teſtified of him: and this wee muſt ſanctifie by earneſt prayer, as Cornelius did, Act. 10. 1, 2.

b Joh. 5. 35.

The third occaſion of offence taken from the Church, is *the miſerie thereof*: for the ſtate of the Church is oftentimes in affliction, becauſe it conſiſteth of ſuch as are ſubject to the contempt and reproach of the world. Hence ſundry are diſcouraged from joyning themſelves truly to the Church: and although this occaſion of offence bee not much among us, ſave onely in reproaches, yet it may be more: and therefore wee muſt learne to prevent it, and to cut it off.

3 From the miſery of the Church.

Remedie. Conſider the priviledges of the Church.

The way is this; *We muſt believe and remember, that out of the Church there is no ſalvation:* In this regard Noahs Arke was a true type of the Church; for as none were ſaved from drowning, that were out of the Arke, in the generall deluge; ſo none can bee ſaved ordinarily from condemnation, that are out of the Church: for in the Church is Gods covenant of grace, with the Sacraments, which be the ſeales thereof. In the Church is vocation, juſtification, ſanctification, and the way to glorification; but out of the Church are none of all theſe, and therefore it is ſaid, that [c] *God added to his Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.* In the Church is protection againſt all enemies, and from all judgements ſo farre forth as ſhall bee for the glory of God, and the good of the Church: and in a word, in the Church is life everlaſting; but out of the Church, is nothing but a fearefull looking for of eternall woe and condemnation: and for this cauſe [d] *Moſes choſe rather to ſuffer affliction in Gods Church, than to enjoy all the pleaſures in the world out of it*: whoſe example wee ought to follow, and ſo ſhall not the miſerie of the Church be any occaſion unto us to forſake the ſame, eſpecially if wee conſider, *that the whole world will profit a man nothing, if hee loſe his ſoule*, Matth. 16. 26.

1

2

c Act. 2. 47.

3

d Heb. 11. 26.

The fourth offence taken from the Church is, *From the Apoſtacie of ſome that live in the Church*; for ordinarily in Gods Church are many Apoſtates, as in this our Church, many that were in times paſt Proteſtants, are become Papiſts, ſome Arrians, Sabellians, and ſome open Atheiſts, and blaſphemers. Hence many, fearing their falls (as they pretend) dare not joyne themſelves to the truth, and the profeſſion thereof. But to cut off this occaſion, two rules muſt be remembred; Firſt, *That the falling away of any man from the truth, is the worke of God, diſcovering an hidden hypocrite.* 1 Joh. 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had beene of us, they would have continued with us: but this is come to paſſe, that it might appeare, they were not all of us.* Secondly, conſider that the beginning and continuance of our religion and ſalvation, ſtands on Gods free election, which is unchangeable; and hereupon

4 From the Apoſtacy of ſome.

Remedie. 1 Rule.

2 Rule.

A muſt wee ſtay our ſelves touching our eſtate, when we ſee others fall away. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Paul comforteth the Church, againſt the feare of griefe which they might conceive, by the Apoſtacie of *Himeneus* and *Philetus*, which were two pillars amongſt them, by this Rule; *The foundation of God remaineth ſure, and hath this ſeale: the Lord knoweth who are his.* Now becauſe ſome might ſay, God indeed knowes it, but we doe not: to this (I take it) the Apoſtle anſwers, when he ſaith, *and let every one that calls upon the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity*: as if he ſhould ſay, Looke that you call upon God for grace, and make conſcience of all ſinne, and by this you ſhall know your ſelves to belong to God; which thing when once you know, then ſtay thereon, for Gods calling is

B unchangeable.

Againe, as theſe occaſions are taken from the whole Church in generall, ſo more eſpecially, ſome take offence from ſeverall things therein: as firſt, from the *wants that be in Miniſters, both for judgement and doctrine.* Hence politike carnall men plead thus: Preaching is full of imperfection, therein men publiſh their owne errors; but the written Word containeth in it the Sermons of Chriſt, and of his Apoſtles, which are moſt perfect: and therefore it is beſt to content our ſelves with the Scripture read, and to heare no preaching by men.

More ſpecially offences in the Church.

1 From want in Miniſters doctrine.

To cut off this offence, wee muſt remember, that the preaching of the Word, though it bee

C by ſinfull man, is Gods holy ordinance, preſcribed and injoyned as ſolemnly, as any moral precept is, either againſt murther, or adultery: for from the beginning, till the Jewes came to Mount Sina, God himſelfe preached to his Church, which was then contained in ſome few families. But from that time, [e] *becauſe the people could not abide the voyce of God himſelfe*, it pleaſed him to ordaine the Miniſtery of the Word, by the hand of ſinfull man. Now it being Gods owne ordinance, unleſſe we will make our ſelves wiſer than God, wee muſt ſubject our ſelves thereto, with all reverence, albeit it bee delivered by ſinfull man. Thus *Cornelius* did, Act. 10. 33. and the Theſſalonians, 1 Theſſ. 2. 13.

Remedie.

e Deut. 5. 28.

Secondly, many are offended at the lives of

D Miniſters, and from the wants that be in them, whether in deed, or in ſuſpition onely, many take occaſion to contemne their doctrine; thinking, as the Rulers of the Jewes ſaid to the blind man; *Thou art altogether borne in ſin, and doeſt thou teach [f] us?* Now to cut off this occaſion, two things muſt be remembred: Firſt, we muſt diſtinguiſh of every Miniſter, and conſider in him a double perſon: both that he is a ſinfull man, ſubject to many infirmities, as we our ſelves are: and alſo that hee is the Lords Ambaſſadour, ſent in Gods name to deliver his will unto us. Now looke as wee honour the Ambaſſadour of a Prince, though his perſon be vile and baſe; ſo much more ought wee to reverence

2 From the lives of Miniſters.

f Joh. 9. 34.

Remedie.

1

verence the Embaſſadour of God himſelfe, and receive his doctrine, as from God, though for his perſon, he be ſubject to manifold infirmities. Secondly, we muſt conſider, that it is Gods will and commandement, that though miniſters be manifeſtly faulty and ſinfull, yet their miniſtery muſt be received and obeyed carefully, Mat. 23. 2. *The Scribes and Phariſes ſit in Moſes chaire* (ſaith Chriſt,) *all therefore that they bid you obſerve, that doe, but after their workes doe not.* Phil. 1. 15. *Some preach Chriſt of envy* (ſaith *Paul*) *and not in ſincerity, but yet the Apoſtles rejoyced therein, becauſe Chriſt was preached every manner of way*, verſ. 18. And therefore, as we doe not refuſe meate for our bodies when wee be hungry, though a wicked perſon have dreſſed it; ſo muſt wee not refuſe or contemne the Word of God, the food of our ſoules, for the ſinnes of the party that delivereth it.

A

B

Thirdly, many take offence at the lenity of the Church towards offenders; and for the preſence of wicked perſons at the Lords table, doe refuſe to communicate with the Church: now albeit men ſhould not be admitted hand over head, to the Lords table, but ſcandalous perſons ought to be reſtrained; yet the want thereof ought not to keepe the godly from this Sacrament: for another mans evill conſcience cannot defile thy good conſcience, another mans ſinne cannot hurt thee, unleſſe thou doe ſome way communicate with him therein. Chriſt was more careſull in his duty, than ever man was, and yet hee communicated with the wicked Jewes, Scribes and Phariſes, in the ſervice of God, under the Law.

3 From lenity towards offenders.

The fourth head from whence offence is taken, is *the ſtate of the wicked, principally in regard of their proſperity.* Hence ſome holy ones ſuſpect their owne eſtate and religion, as either not good, or not regarded of God. This befell *David*, Pſal. 73. when he ſaw the proſperitie of the wicked, and their increaſe in riches, with peace, and eaſe, he ſaid, [g] *Certainely I have cleanſed mine heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency.* Hence alſo *Jeremy* reaſons with God, [h] *why the way of the wicked ſhould proſper, and they bee in wealth that tranſgreſſe rebelliouſly.* Hence undoubtedly at this day, many call into queſtion the good providence of God. Now the way to cut off this offence is, to [i] *enter into the ſanctuary of God*, as *David* did; that is, to come to the aſſemblies of Gods people, where the Word is preached: for there a man ſhall ſee the manifold reaſons, why God will have his owne people afflicted, and alſo the fearefull end of the pleaſures of the wicked; namely, a fitting of them to further deſtruction. Againe, from this ſame ground, doe many rich men take offence; for hauing the world at will, they bleſſe themſelves with this perſwaſion, that God loves them, and thereupon take occaſion to condemne all religion, and to goe on in the purſuit of wordly profits and delights. And this is one maine cauſe, why among the rich, wee have ſo few good and ſound Profeſ-

4 Generall head of offences taken. From the eſtate of the wicked.

g Verſ. 13.

h Ier. 12. 1.

i Pſal. 73. 17.

C

D

A ſors; becauſe that from a falſe ground of outward things, they perſwade themſelves of Gods love and favour. But to cut off this offence, wee muſt remember that mans caſe is the more fearfull, when hee wants all croſſes: for *God chaſtenneth every childe whom he receiveth*, Heb. 12. 6. and it is a marke of Gods child, to be in affliction, if hee profit thereby: the ſtalled oxe commeth ſooner to the ſlaughter, than the oxe that is under the yoke; and the ſheepe that goeth in fat paſture commeth ſooner to the ſhambles, than that which goeth on the bare commons: ſo oftentimes God fatteth the wicked with the bleſſings of this life, as hee did [l] the rich glutton, that he may more juſtly condemne them in the world to come. Laſtly, we muſt remember what *Salomon* ſaith, [k] *No man knoweth love or hatred, of all that is before him*: that is, of all outward things: *all things fall alike unto all, both good and bad*: and therefore no man muſt ſo bleſſe himſelfe with his outward eſtate, that he be drawne to eſteeme of religion, as a thing needleſſe or ſuperfluous.

Remedie.

l Luk. 16. 25.

k Eccl. 9. 1, 2.

B

V. 31 *It hath beene ſaid alſo, whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, let him give her a Bill of divorcement:*

32 *But I ſay unto you, whoſoever ſhall put away his wife (except it be for fornication,) cauſeth her to commit adulterie: and whoſoever ſhall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.*

C

Our Saviour Chriſt proceeding further to reſtore the ſeventh Commandement to his perfection, doth here confute a falſe interpretation of a Politicke law of *Moſes*, given by the Scribes and Phariſes. For this end, firſt he laies downe the words of *Moſes* politicke law; but yet ſo, as containing in them the falſe interpretation of the Jewiſh teachers, v. 31. then hee oppoſeth the truth of God againſt their falſe interpretation, and maintaineth the firſt inſtitution of marriage, v. 32.

D

For the firſt, *Moſes* politicke law was, *That her which put away his wife, ſhould give her a Bill of divorce.* This law the Jewiſh Teachers did falſly interpret: for the better perceiving whereof, theſe three points are to be handled, touching *Moſes* politicke law: 1 what kind of law it was: 2 the ſtraitneſſe of that law: 3 what effect and force it had. For the firſt, the law is ſet downe, Deut. 24. 1. *When a man marrieth a wife, and ſhe finde no favour in his eyes, becauſe he hath eſpied ſome filthineſſe in her: then let him*

him write her a bill of divorce and put in her hand, and send her out of his house. This law was not morall but civill, or politicke, for the good ordering of the Common-wealth. Now among their particular lawes, some were *lawes of toleration and permission*, which were such as did not approve of the evill which they concerned, but did onely tolerate and permit that evill which could not be avoided, for the preventing of a greater evill, which otherwise would fall out. As when the sea hath made a breach into the land, if it cannot possibly bee stopped, the best course is to make it as narrow as may be. Such was the law concerning usury, Deut. 23.20. permitting the Jewes to exercise it upon a stranger, but not towards a brother: and the like was the law touching polygamie, Deut. 21.15. If a man had two wives, the one hated, the other loved; and they both have borne him children: if the first borne be the sonne of the hated (though she were married to him the latter) yet her seed was legitimate, and her sonne had the right of the first borne. In both which lawes were tolerated that which God condemned, onely for the preventing of a greater evill. Under this sort comes our law of usury, for taking ten in the hundred, not approving but permitting so much for the avoiding of greater usury. Unto this kinde the Papists would reduce their law of permitting Stewes, for the preventing of greater sinnes: but that law can have no title to such permission: for a law of permission, is to diminish that evill, which by man cannot possibly be cut off altogether: now that sinne, which they would prevent by their Stewes, might be cut off among them, if they would give allowance to Gods owne ordinance of lawfull marriage unto all sorts and sexes. So likewise this law of *Moses* for divorce, was a law of permission, not approving of the giving a bill of divorce for every light cause, but tolerating of it for the preventing of greater mischiefe, even of murther: for the nature of the Jewes was this; if a man once tooke dislike of his wife, he would never be at rest till he had shed her bloud, if they might not be parted asunder. Now this law of divorce was given to restraine this great evill: for hereby a man was tolerated to put away his wife when shee found no favour in his eyes, lest he should kill her: yet so, as he gave her a bill of divorce, wherein he must set downe the cause why hee put her away: whereby also many were restrained from putting away their wives, because it was a great shame for a light occasion so highly to transgresse Gods holy institution, who made them by marriage one flesh. The truth of this may appeare by the Lords owne complaint against his people, to whom hee speaketh as to a wife that had forsaken her husband without a cause on his behalfe, Isa. 50.1. *Where* (saith he) *is that bill of your mothers divorcement, whereby I sent her away?* As if hee should say, I gave her no bill, but her departure and separation

Bellarm. de Amissi. gran. & lib. 1. cap. 18. Harding consit. of the Apology part. 4. cap. 3. div. 1.

Matth. 5. ver. 32.

A from me, is by her owne sinnes: which phrase sheweth what was the custome of the Jewes in this case.

II. Point. The *strainesse of this Law* appeares in this, that the man onely was permitted to give this bill unto his wife, but the wife might not give it to her husband: for *Moses* saith, *Whosoever shall put away his wife*: neither is there any place in Scripture to prove that the wife had this liberty so to deale with her husband. If it be asked whether the wife in a just cause, as for adultery, had not the like liberty: I answer, Have respect Gods institution touching marriage, the right of divorce is equall to them both: for in regard of the bond of marriage they are equally bound one to another. Here indeed this liberty is permitted onely to the man by this politicke law, not that he had more right, but to prevent the evill of the hardnesse of his heart, whereakin displeasure at his wife, would rather spill her bloud than continue with her. If it be alleaged that *a man* [a] *is the womans head*: I answer, that is for regiment and direction in her place, but not in regard of breaking the bond of marriage, whereby hee is bound to his wife as well as she to him, as the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 7.4.

[a] 1 Cor. 11.3.

III. Point. The *force* and *effect of this Law* was this; It made the Bill of divorcement for any cause given, to be tolerable before men; and marriage after such a divorce, lawfull and warrantable in the Courts of men, Deut. 24.4. But yet in the Court of conscience before God, the divorcement it selfe, and second marriages made thereupon, were both unlawfull; *for God hateth this separation*, Mal. 2.15. And whether party soever marrieth another upon this divorce, commits adulterie, Matth. 19.9. This must be remembred for the true understanding of this law of *Moses*; the first words whereof are a permission to this effect: If a man doe conceive such a dislike against his wife, as that he will not abide with her, but will needs put her away, then he may; but yet so that he give her a bill of divorce: which doth not acquite him before God, but before men onely.

Having thus shewed the true meaning of this law, it remaineth now to see what the Pharises taught touching divorce. Their doctrine was this, That he which gave a bill of divorcement unto his wife, for any light occasion, was thereby acquited from her before God; and thereupon might marry another without the guilt of adultery: and also that another man might lawfully marry her that was thus divorced. That this was their meaning, may appeare by the contrary answer of our Saviour Christ, wherein he crosseth and confuteth this their interpretation, in the words following:

Vers. 32. *But I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, (except it be for fornication) causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.*

Here

Here Christ answereth not to *Moses* law, but to the corrupt interpretation of the Scribes and Pharises, whereby they depraved that law. By *fornication*, Christ meaneth not every sinne of that kinde, but onely the sinne of *adultery*; or that which is greater in that kinde, namely, *incest*. Adultery is a sinne that is committed by two parties, one whereof is either married, or espoused, as hath beene shewed before. *Causeth her to commit adultery*: That is, giveth her occasion to marry againe, and so to commit adultery; because their first bond remaineth still. *And he that marrieth her that is divorced*: That is, for any small cause, and not for adultery, he also commits adultery.

Here then two points are set downe; First, *that hee who puts away his wife for any light cause, causeth her to commit adultery*. Secondly, *he that marrieth her that is divorced, committeth adultery*. Yet unto both these Christ putteth an exception in the case of adultery. The [a] Papists and some others, would restraine the exception to the first part of the sentence, and make it a negation to this effect; *He that puts away his wife, being no fornicator, &c.* But the truth is, that the exception belongs to the whole answer of our Saviour Christ, denying divorce, save onely for adultery; and permitting no marriage after divorcement, save onely where the divorce is for adultery.

[a] Rhemon. this place.

The use.

First, whereas our Saviour Christ opposeth unto this politicke law of *Moses* concerning divorce, the law of Nature touching marriage, Gen. 2.24. he giveth us an excellent distinction betweene all politicke lawes, and the law of Nature, which is the morall law; for that is a law of eternall equity, commanding good, and forbidding evill simply, without respect of man: but politicke lawes are tempered according to the conditions of men, and though they doe not approve, yet sometime they permit evill, for the avoiding of greater mischiefe, yea, they tolerate that, which before God, and in conscience is condemned. This point must teach us, not to content our selves with performing obedience to the politicke lawes of men, for the lawes of men may tolerate that which Gods law doth condemne: so the law of this Land in practice tolerates usury, but usurers must not hereupon thinke that all is safe and well with them, and that they sinne not in taking ten in the hundred, because the law of the land permits it; for our law tolerates that for the preventing of greater usury, when as the law of God doth utterly condemne the same. Againe, our lawes are open for men to goe to law at the first, upon every light occasion, without seeking former meanes of agreement: but yet such men as doe so, are guilty of sinne before God, notwithstanding their liberty by our politicke lawes. Some politicke lawes also tolerate contracts of marriage, made without consent of parents; yet such children sinne against the law of God: for herein God requires childrens subjection to their parents and governours. And the like might be shewed in many other points; so that is no sufficient justification of our actions, to say the lawes of men allow us so to doe.

Secondly, hence we may learne that a man cannot lawfully and with good conscience put away his wife, except it be for adultery; the text is cleare both here, and also in Mat. 19.9. which confuteth the civill lawes of some countries, and the [a] Popish constitutions that allow other causes of [b] divorce, besides adultery. Here they object sundry things in their defence against this doctrine: As 1. the saying of Christ, *Whosoever forsaketh Father, or Mother, Wife, &c. shall receive much remard*, Mat. 19.29. Here (say they) is divorce for religion allowed. *Ans.* Christ by *forsaking*, meaneth not that separation which is made by giving a Bill of divorcement; but that which is caused by imprisonment, banishment, or by death.

[a] Concil. Trid. sess. 24. can. 1.
[b] Non repudiised divortii Bellar. de Matrimon. c. 14.

2 *Object.* 1 Cor. 7.15. *If the unbeleeving depart, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not bound in such things.* Here (say they) is another cause of divorce. *Ans.* The malicious or wilfull departing of the unbeleever, doth dissolve the marriage; but that is no cause of giving a Bill of divorce: onely adultery causeth that. Here the beleever is a meere patient, and the divorce is made by the unbeleever, who unjustly forsaketh, and to puts away the other.

3 *Object.* Titus 3.10. *Avoid an heretike after once or twice admonition.* This (say they) is spoken to all Christians; and therefore for heresie may a bill of divorce be given. *Ans.* First, that commandement is not given to every private person, but to the Ministers of the Church, who after one or two admonitions are to excommunicate and cut off all heretikes from the Church. Secondly, it hinderetch not, but that the bond of marriage may remaine sure and sinne, though one of the parties be cut off from the Church; *for the beleeving husband must not forsake his unbeleeving wife, if she will dwell with him*: 1 Cor. 7.12.

4 *Object.* After marriage one party may have a contagious and incurable disease, which may cause the other to give a bill of divorce. *Answer.* A contagious disease may cause a separation for a time, but no divorce; and if that disease bee incurable, and disable the party from the duty of marriage, then such persons must thinke themselves, as it were, called of God to live in single life.

5 *Object.* But married persons may seeke to spill the bloud one of another, and therefore it is good to give a bill of divorce, to prevent that evill. *Ans.* Such enmity may cause a separation for a time, till reconciliation be made, but the bond of marriage must not therefore be broken.

6 *Object.* Death maketh a divorce. *Ans.* Death indeed endeth marriage-estate, and setteth the party living free, to marry in the Lord, where he or she will: but this comes not by divorce

vorce given of either partie: ſo that the conclusion ſtill remaineth firme, that a man with good conſcience cannot give a bill of divorce for any cauſe, but for adulterie: and therefore thoſe lawes which permit divorce for other cauſes, are greatly faultie before God. If any ſhall aske, whether mens lawes may not make more cauſes of divorcement, than this one? I anſwer, no: for marriage is not a meere civill thing, but partly ſpirituall and divine, and therfore God only hath power to appoint the beginning, the continuance, and the end thereof. If any yet aske, why Idolatrie and Magicke, which be greater ſinnes than adulterie, may not breake marriage? *Anſ.* They are greater indeed, againſt God, but not in this ordinance of marriage: for the ſinne of adulterie, breaketh only the bond of marriage, which may remaine ſtill betweene two parties, though one be an idolater, a witch, or an Atheiſt. Now conſidering that Adulterie is ſo great a ſinne, that it cuts off the knot of marriage, above all things, thoſe perſons that are called to this eſtate, muſt take heed of all ſins, ſo of this eſpecially.

Thirdly, here may be asked, whether after divorce for adulterie, the parties divorced may marrie againe, without committing adulterie? This point hath beene diverſly diſcuſſed, wee will conſider the reaſons on both ſides: First, for the lawfulneſse of it, eſpecially to the partie innocent.

1 From *Chriſts doctrine* in this place: for in his anſwer to the falſe interpretation of *Moſes* politicke Law, touching divorce, he firſt propounds a generall rule, and then puts an exception thereto: the nature of which exception is, alwaies to imply and put downe the contrary to the generall rule. As in this place; the generall rule is, *Whoſoever putteth away his wife, cauſeth her to commit adulterie: and he that marrieth her committeth adulterie.* The exception then muſt be contrarie; namely, that in the caſe of adulterie, hee that puts away his wife lawfully convicted thereof, cauſeth her not to commit adulterie; neither he that marrieth her that is divorced, doth commit adulterie. If it be ſaid, that Chriſt propoundeth two rules, one for the caſe of divorce, the other for the caſe of marrying after divorce; and applieth his exception for *adulterie* onely to the caſe of divorce, and not to the caſe of marriage after divorce. *Anſ.* As the exception for *adulterie*, is here in this chapter joyned with the caſe of divorce: *he that putteth away his wife, except it be for fornication, &c.* ſo in the 19. chap. v. 9. the ſame exception for adulterie, is expreſſely applyed not only to the caſe of divorce, but alſo to the caſe of marriage after divorce; ſaying, *Whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marrie another, committeth adulterie:* ſo that if in this place the exception make the divorce lawfull for adulterie, then in the 19. chap. it maketh it lawfull to marrie againe after ſuch divorce, without the guilt of adulterie.

A 2. The innocent partie is not to be puniſhed for the wilfulneſse of the offender, and therefore the party that is faultleſſe may with good conſcience marry againe, after lawfull divorce. 2. God hath provided marriage to bee a remedy againſt incontinencie for all perſons, 1 Cor. 7. 2. But if parties lawfully divorced, might not marry againe, then they ſhould want this remedie, and be deprived of this benefit. If it bee ſaid, they may reconcile themſelves each to other, and ſo have remedy. *Anſw.* But what if the party offending live in adultery ſtill, then the party innocent cannot in conſcience joyne him or her ſelfe to the other, and reunite the bond of matrimony; for that were too much lenity towards ſo foule a crime: and a ſinne againſt God, for want of Chriſtian reconciliation, which requireth that this reuniting ſhould bee in the Lord, and not in the fleſh alone. 4. The phraſes of Scripture uſed by the [a] holy Ghoſt, concerning marriage after divorce, reſtraining it to ſome caſes, and allowing it in others, ſeeme to take it for granted, that after lawfull divorce, it is no ſinne to marry againe.

Reaſons alleaged on the other ſide: First, Chriſts generall ſaying, [b] *Whoſoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery.* Hence ſome inferre, that there may be no marriage at all after any divorce. But they abuſe that Scripture: for though S. *Marke* put downe no exception, yet *Matthew* hath made ſupply thereof in two places, Chap. 5. 32. and 19. 9. Now the Goſpels were penned by ſeverall men, that that which was not fully expreſſed by one, might be ſupplyed by another; that ſo by conferring writer with writer, the whole truth might be made manifeſt.

Secondly, Math. 19. 6. *Whom God hath coupled, let no man put aſunder:* Therefore after divorce, they ſtill remaine man and wife before God, and may not marry to others. *Anſ.* The party offending breakes the bond of marriage, and ſo ſinneth grievouſly againſt that commandement: but the party innocent marrying againe after lawfull divorce, onely taketh the benefit of that liberty, whereto God hath ſet him free, through the unlawfull breaking of the bond by the party offending.

D Thirdly, Rom. 7. 2. *The woman is bound to the man while he liveth*, and therefore may not marry againe after divorcement. *Anſ.* That place muſt bee underſtood of the ſtate of marriage, continuing indiſſolved till death: but in the caſe of adultery, the bond of marriage is broken: and therefore that hindreth not, but marriage may be after lawfull divorce.

Fourthly, 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11. *Let not the wife depart from her husband; and if ſhe depart, let her remaine unmarried, and be reconciled unto her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife.* Here (ſay they) is a plaine place againſt marriage after divorcement. *Anſw.* The Apoſtle ſpeaketh of departure, and putting away, for other cauſes than adulterie; as for hatred, diſlike,

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[a] Deut. 24. 1, 2, 3. Mat. 19. 8. Hellanicus de Matrim. Sacra. c. 16.

[b] Mar. 10. 11.

diſlike, &c. which indeed are no ſufficient cauſes of divorce, and therefore they that ſeparate thereupon, ought not to marry.

Fifthly, the bond of marriage, is a reſemblance of the conjunction that is betweene Chriſt and his Church, which is inſeparable and eternall: and therefore marriage alſo is inſeparable. *Anſ.* That reſemblance ſtands not in every thing, but in this, *That as in marriage two are made one fleſh, ſo ſpiritually Chriſt, and every true member of his Church become one:* and that *as Eve was taken out of Adams ſide, and made fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone; ſo the Church ſpringeth as it were out of Chriſts blood, which iſſued from his ſide:* for elſe, if their reaſon were good, we might ſay that marriage ſhould be eternall in the life to come; becauſe the union of Chriſt with his Church is eternall: which we know to be falſe, for *in the* [c] *resurrection men marry not, but are as the Angels of God.*

Sixtly, if parties divorced might marry againe, their children ſhould be injured, having ſtepfathers, or ſtep-mothers in ſtead of their owne naturall parents. *Anſ.* This reaſon is not ſufficient to diſallow divorce, or marriage after it: for by the ſame reaſon we might deſude all the judiciall lawes of *Moſes*, and of all countries, which impoſe death for ſundry crimes, becauſe thereby ſome children ſhould loſe their parents: but Juſtice muſt be juſtice with all men, though the poſterity have hindrance by the execution thereof. *Queſt.* But what if the lawes of ſome countries forbid marriage after divorcement? *Anſ.* Yet the liberty of conſcience remaineth ſtill: for this being given of God, cannot be taken away by man; and therefore when men have freedome from the Magiſtrate, they may with good conſcience marry againe after lawfull divorce. And yet here we muſt know, that divorcement, or marriage after, muſt not be done privately, by man and wife upon their owne heads, but by order of law, before the Magiſtrate, according to the cuſtome of that Church or common-wealth whom it concerns. Againe, there be ſome particular cauſes which may juſtly hinder marriage after divorce: as firſt if the parties reunite their bond againe by reconciliation: *for the knot broken by adultery, may be reunited again by the conſent of the party innocent.* Secondly, when the one party is a manifeſt cauſe of the Adultery of the other, and ſo becomes an acceſſarie to the others offence: for it ſeemes unequall, that he who hath put his hand to the committing of a ſinne, ſhould reape any benefit or privilege by the ſame. And therefore I ſay the party innocent hath freedome in this caſe.

[c] Mat. 22. 30.

Cautions.

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V. 33 *Againe, yee have heard that it was ſaid to them of old time, Thou ſhalt not forſweare thy ſelfe: but ſhalt performe thine oathes unto the Lord.*

34 *But I ſay unto you, ſweare not at all, &c.*

Our Saviour Chriſt having reſtored the ſeventh commandement to his true ſenſe and meaning, doth here proceed to doe the like unto the *third commandement*: obſerving herein the ſame order that he did in the former: for firſt, he layeth downe the falſe interpretation of the Scribes and Phariſes given to this commandement concerning ſwearing, v. 33. and then delivereth the true doctrine of an oath, v. 34. The corrupt ſenſe given by the Scribes and Phariſes, is propounded in the words of the holy Ghoſt, Levit. 19. 12. Deu. 5. 11. *Thou ſhalt not forſweare thy ſelfe, but ſhalt performe thine oathes unto the Lord*: which are not here taken in that true meaning wherein *Moſes* ſet them downe, but in the falſe interpretation of the Jewiſh Teachers: whereof that we may the better judge, let us ſearch out the true meaning of *Moſes* law concerning an oath: for which end we muſt firſt ſee what *perjury* is; then propound the *kindes of perjury*; and lattly, ſhew the *grievouſneſſe* of this ſinne.

I. Point. In *perjury* there muſt be two things: *Firſt*, a man muſt affirme or avouch ſomething againſt his owne mind, his owne meaning, purpoſe, intention, or perſwaſion. When a man knowes a thing to be true, and ſaith it is true: or knoweth a thing to be falſe, and ſaith it is falſe, and ſweares thereto, this is no perjury, becauſe his ſpeech is anſwerable to that which is in his mind: but when a man knowes a thing to be true, and avoucheth it to be falſe; or knowing a thing to be falſe, avoucheth it to be true, upon his oath; this is perjury: becauſe in ſo doing, hee ſpeakes againſt his minde and perſwaſion. *Secondly*, in perjury there muſt be an oath; it is not perjury to ſpeake a thing that is falſe, unleſſe hee alſo ſweare to the thing hee ſpeaketh falſly, againſt his mind: and yet every oath maketh not direct perjury, unleſſe it be a binding oath: for a man may ſweare to a thing that is unlawfull, and after alter his minde, and not performe his oath, without the guilt of perjury: as if a childe being under age, doe binde himſelfe by oath to marry, without his parents conſent; but comming to riper yeares, doth better conſider of the matter, and ſubjects himſelfe to his parents diſpoſing, who marry him to another. Now though he ſinned in ſo ſwearing, yet hee is not perjured, becauſe the oath was not a binding oath; for a child under yeares hath no power to take an oath.

Of perjury.

II. Point. That we may yet better judge of this ſinne, we muſt know that there be three kindes of perjurie: First, *when a man confirmeth by oath, that which hee knowes or thinkes*

Kinds of perjury.

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to be otherwise; as when he takes an oath that a thing is true, which he knowes to be false; that a thing was thus, which he knowes was otherwise. Secondly, *Deceitfull swearing is perjury*, when a man, either about things past, or to come, sweares contrary to the true knowledge and purpose of his owne minde. Example of this we have in the Romish Priests, who both defend in writing, and practise in action, this deceitfull swearing: for being brought before the Magistrate, and made to sweare to this demand, or such like; *Whether they said Masse, or knew where Masse was said at such a time?* They answer upon their oaths, *That they did not, nor knew not*, (though indeed they did,) which is according to their doctrine, *That unto dangerous interrogatories a man may frame a false meaning unto himselfe, and sweare to it*: as in the former instance, they sweare they knew not where Masse was said, meaning, *to reveale it to the Judge*. But this is flat perjury: for their oath is given them to answer according to the meaning of the Magistrates demand: and if a man might lawfully frame a meaning to himselfe in swearing, hee might easily delude all truth, and to *should not an oath for confirmation be the end of strife*, but the breeder thereof, through surmise of false meaning in him that sweareth. The third kinde of perjury is, *The breaking of a binding oath*; as when a man upon his oath promiseth to doe a thing that is lawfull, and doth it not: yet this is not alwayes perjury: as First, If God after the oath taken, make the thing promised, impossible to be done: as if a man sweare to make another his heire, of such and such lands; now dwelling by the Sea side, the Sea breakes out, drowns all his land before he dieth: Is this man perjured, because hee performed not his promise bound with an oath? no verily: for God made the thing impossible. Secondly, if a man bee bound in conscience to breake his oath: Thus [a] *David swearing rashly to slay Nabal and his family*, was yet staied from so doing by *Abigails* counsell, and brake his oath, and [b] *gave God thanks for it*: for indeed his oath was unlawfull, being the bond of iniquity; and the doing of it had beene the doubling of his sinne.

Here it may well bee demanded, whether those that are sworne to the Statutes and lawes of societies and incorporations be perjured, if they breake the same? *Ans.* The Statutes of incorporations be of two sorts; some are of the foundation of societies, without which the incorporation cannot stand; and these (not being against the Word of God) cannot be broken without the guilt of perjury: others, are Statutes onely of outward order and decencie; as touching apparell, gesture, and such like: as in some incorporations the Statutes require, that every man therein should weare the round cap: hereunto many are sworne, who alwayes weare it not: now, though I say not that they are faultlesse altogether, yet they are not perjured; because this Statute of order, binds not a man simply, but either to obedience, or to pay the mulct; which if a man be content to pay, hee satisfies the Statute, and benefits the society, as much as if he kept the Statute.

Tost. Summa Casuist. lib. 4. c. 22.

a 1 Sam. 25. 22.

b ver. 32.

Having shewed what perjury is, with the kindes thereof, let us see whether wee be free from it. After examination it will appeare, that mens lives are full of perjury; for where is much swearing usually, there cannot but bee much perjury: because they that sweare in their common talke, doe forget their oaths, as they doe their communication. But say wee are cleare from perjury, yet me wee in danger of Gods heavy judgements for the breach of our vow in baptisme; wherein we promise to beleeve in God, and to serve him, forsaking the world, the flesh, and the devill: now the breach of this vow, is as ill as perjury: for therefore may *Baptisme* be called a Sacrament, because of the oath and vow which a Christian makes to God therein; for the word Sacrament properly, betokeneth the oath which a Souldier maketh to his Captaine for his fidelity. The breaking of *Iosuas* his oath unto the Gibeonites, by *Saul*, [c] *caused three yeares dearth*, and was not satisfied, but *with the blood of seven of Saults kindred*. And [d] *Zedekias perjury to the King of Babel*, was one cause of the Lords fierce wrath against Jerusalem, and the Princes thereof. Now shall one mans perjury cause such judgements, and shall wee not thinke, that among other sinnes this our perjury unto God, in breaking our vow in Baptisme, bringeth upon us Gods heavy wrath, by plague, famine, and unseasonable weather? Wherefore let the consideration hereof perswade us to repentance, and to a more conscionable care of performing our vow unto God.

Mattheus Sacrati prouper piam mentionem de opinion. Mitiores. Vergnius de eremite.

c 1 Sam. 21. 1.

d Ezek. 17. 13. 15. 19.

III. Point. The grievousnesse of this sinne of perjury, which the Lord here forbids, appeares by these three sinnes which are contained in it: First, the uttering, or maintaining of a lie. Secondly, the calling on God to be a witnesse unto a lie: wherein men doe, as much as in them lieth, set the devill himselfe, the father of lies, in the roome of God, and so greatly rob him of his honour and majesty. Thirdly, in perjury a man prayes for a curse upon himselfe, wishing God to be a witnesse of his speech, and a Judge to revenge, if hee sweare falsly; so as herein a man is his owne utter enemy, and as much as in him lyeth, doth cast both body and soule to hell.

Grievousnesse of perjury.

Quest. Seeing this sinne of perjury is so great, whether may such a man bee put to his oath, as is certainely thought will perjure himselfe, if hee be put to sweare? I answer, men that put others to sweare, are either private persons, or publike Magistrates: a private man for his owne private cause, may not put such a man to his oath; for he should have greater care of Gods glory, and of the other mans soule, than of

of his private gaine: and therefore ought rather depart from his temporall right, than suffer his brother so to dishonour God, and to hurt his owne soule. But if a Magistrate be to put such a man to his oath, as is verily thought will perjure himselfe, he may lawfully doe it; but yet he is first, to advertise the party of the weight of an oath, and of the fearefull sinne of perjury; and then, if the order of Law and Justice so require, he may minister an oath unto him, leaving the event to God: for the execution of justice must not stay on mans misdemeanor, nor wait till they make conscience of sinne; for if it did, no Common-wealth could stand, no ware could be made: *Moses* and the Levites executed vengeance upon the idolatrous Jewes, without waiting for their repentance.

Exod. 32. 27. 28.

But shalt performe thine oaths unto the Lord.] These words are not set downe in any of *Moses* bookes, but are a collection from the former law of *Moses*, gathered by the Jewish Teachers: which collection though it be not expressly set downe, yet is it the very sense of the Law: for if a man cannot without perjury breake a lawfull binding oath, then that Law which forbiddeth perjury, bindeth man to performe all that hee hath lawfully sworne unto God.

The first bond of an oath.

Here then in this collection of the Jewish Teachers, is set downe an excellent point, touching the *strannesse of the bond of an oath*. In every lawfull oath, there is a double bond: First, it bindes one man to another, for the performing of the thing he sweareth to doe. Secondly, it bindes a man unto God: for he that sweareth, invocates God as a witnesse, and a Judge of the truth of his assertion; and he stands bound unto God, till the thing sworne unto, bee performed, if it be lawfull and possible. And here in the Pharises are good Teachers, and from this their collection, we learne sundry points:

A constrained oath of things lawfull binder.

First, that if a man take an oath, though he were constrained thereto by feare, yet it must bee kept, if it be of things lawfull and possible; because in an oath a man stands bound unto the Lord: as if a man sweare unto a Theefe for the saving of his life, that hee will bring him some money, or other booty of his owne goods; this he is to performe, because the losse is private; but if hee were sworne further, not to detect the Theefe, that were a bond of iniquity, tending to the hurt of the Common-wealth: and therefore such an oath a man ought not to take: and if he doe so sweare, yet hee must not keepe it, but repent of his rash oath.

An oath gotten by error.

Secondly, if a man be brought to sweare by error, being overtaken by another, yet if it were of things lawfull, within his power, it must be kept: so did *Iosuah* to the Gibeonites, and the breach thereof by [e] *Saul was grievously punished*, as we shewed before.

e Iosh. 9. 15.

An oath in damaging.

Thirdly, if a man sweare unto a lawfull promise, and it fall out, that the keeping of his oath procure him great temporall losses; yet the oath must be kept, because therein lies his obedience to God: This *David* noteth for a property of him that *must rest in Gods holy mountain, to keepe his promise whereto hee is bound by an oath, though it turne to his owne hinderance*. Psal. 15. v. 4.

Fourthly, here wee may see, that the [f] doctrine and [g] practice of the Church of Rome is wicked and damnable: They teach, that the Bishop of Rome, by the power of the Keyes, may free a man in conscience from the bond of a lawfull oath. Indeed if the bond were onely betweene man and man, it were something; but being betweene God and man, hee that will dispense therewith, must be above, or at least equall to God himselfe. The Pharises doctrine was farre better, who taught that mens oaths must be performed unto God, without dispensing therewith. And therefore our English Priests who before have sworne to the Supremacie of this state, and now are reconciled to the Pope, are flatly perjured persons, and so to be held.

f Anonius Tolet. Tost. Mercat. 15. g Sixtus 5. Promiss. in Bullar. Rom.

But howsoever the Pharises make this one good collection, yet they erre grossely in their further meaning and expounding of this law: for when as God forbiddeth a man to forsweare himselfe, hence they gather; first, that it was lawfull to sweare ordinarily in common talke, even by the name of God, so that they sware truly, and did not forsweare themselves: that this was their meaning, will appeare in Christs answer. Secondly, hence they gathered, that the Law spake nothing of indirect oaths: for they made two kindes of oaths: *direct* by the name of God, and *indirect* by the creatures. And as they held that a man might sweare directly by the name of God without sinne in common talke, so they taught, that swearing indirectly by the creatures, as by heaven, by the temple, the head, altar, and such like, was nothing; neither the breaking thereof was any perjury, as *Matth.* 23. 16. And like unto these Jewes are Popish Teachers, who hold that men may not onely sweare by the name of God, but by holy things, as by the Rood, the Masse, Saints, and Angels, if they be not abused.

Matth. 23. 9. 20. and 16.

ver. 34. *But I say unto you, sweare not at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, &c.* Here Christ confuteth the false interpretation of the Jewish Teachers. And his answer is propounded first generally; *sweare not at all*: then particularly in the words following to the 38. verse. The words of his generall answer are somewhat hard, and perverted by many; therefore that we may come to the true sense thereof, two points are to be considered: First, what it is to sweare: then, how farre forth Christ forbiddeth swearing. For the first, we shall best conceive of an oath by the parts thereof. In an oath be two things: *Confession*, and *Imprecation*. *Confession* is three-fold; though for outward forme the words of an oath be few. 1. A man confesseth, that that which hee sweareth is true

Of an oath, in its accessories.

I Confession.

true in his conſcience: 2. that God is a witneſſe not onely of the outward action and ſpeech, but alſo of his particular conſcience: and 3. that God is an omnipotent Judge of all, and of him that ſweareth, able to juſtifie him, if hee ſweare truly, or otherwiſe to condemne him eternally, if he ſweare faiſly. *Imprecation*, the ſecond thing in an oath, is a prayer to God for two things: Firſt, that God would be a witneſſe with him that ſweareth, to teſtifie that he ſweareth truly, and according to his conſcience: ſo *Paul* did, Rom. 9. 1. *I ſpeake the truth in Chriſt, I lie not: my conſcience bearing me witneſſe in the holy Ghoſt.* Secondly, a man prayes that God would become a Judge to curſe him with eternall wrath, if hee ſwore faiſly: 2 Cor. 1. 23. *I call God for a record unto my ſoule*: and the ſonne of ſwearing in the old time, was the uſing of this imprecation; *God doe ſo to me and more alſo, if I doe not thus and thus*: 2 King. 6. 31.

2 Imprecation.

B

How farre Chriſt forbids ſwearing.

We ſee what it is to ſweare. Now we come to ſhew how far forth Chriſt forbiddeth ſwearing, in theſe words; *Sweare not at all.* The Anabaptiſts gather hence that all ſwearing is forbidden, and ſo did ſome [a] Heteticks in the primitive Church; yea, and [b] ſome of the ancient Fathers (that otherwiſe deſerved well of the Church) thought that the Lord in the old Teſtament did onely permit ſwearing, as he did ſome other things that were evill, which he approved not, and that now Chriſt did quite take away the ſame. But this opinion is falſe and erroneous: for ſwearing is [c] *commanded* as a part of Gods worſhip: now if Chriſt ſhould here forbid it, hee ſhould be againſt himſelfe, condemning that which himſelfe approved. Againe, the Apoſtle *Paul* uſed it, as is plaine to be ſeene in the moſt of his Epiſtles: and Heb. 6. 16. *An oath for confirmation is called the ordinance of God for the ending of all ſtrife.* Others (as the Papiſts) ſay that Chriſt here ſets downe a counſell of perfection, not forbidding all ſwearing, but rather wiſhing that men could ſo live in faith, love, and truth, that there ſhould be no uſe of an oath. But this cannot be true: for Chriſts words are not perſwaſive, but prohibitory, expreſly forbidding ſwearing. And yet we muſt know, that Chriſts meaning is not here to forbid all ſwearing ſimply, but all ſwearing after the Jewiſh manner and cuſtome; that is, in common talke and communication, as is plaine in the laſt words of this anſwer, when he ſaith, *Let your communication be yea, yea.* For this is a Rule to be obſerved in the interpretation of Scripture, *that things generally ſpoken, muſt particularly be underſtood, according to the circumſtances of the preſent matter in hand*: as when *Paul* ſaith, [d] *he became all things to all men*; if it ſhould be taken generally, we might ſay, that with blaſphemers hee became a blaſphemer, &c. but that ſpeech muſt bee reſtrained to the uſe of things indifferent; in all which hee yeelded to the weakneſſe of all, that hee might winne ſome: and ſo here, *Sweare not at all*, muſt bee reſtrained to the Jewiſh cuſtome, which was to ſweare by the Name of God in their common talke, and by other creatures, both which Chriſt doth utterly forbid.

a Deligian. and Waldenſes.
b Hieronim. Theophyl. Chryſoſt. in Matth. 5.

c Deut. 10. 20.

d 1 Cor. 9.

A

Vſe.

Againſt ordinary ſwearing.

Here firſt, we learne that ordinary ſwearing is unlawfull, either by the Name of God, or by other creatures. This is the common ſinne of our age in all ſorts and degrees: ſome ſweare by their faith; others by their troth, before God, by the croſſe of the coyne, (having money in their hands:) by the fire that is Gods Angell (as they uſe to ſpeake,) others by bread, drinke: and looke how many occaſions men have offered unto them, ſo many oathes have they framed unto themſelves.

2 Minced oathes.

Secondly, here is condemned all minced oathes; as by my fay, maskins, and yea marry; for the ground thereof was this Popiſh oath, by Marie. Thirdly, here are condemned all groſſe oathes by the parts of Chriſts body, as by his heart, bloud, ſides, and ſuch like.

Pretences for ſwearing.

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Yet men have their excuſes for common ſwearing; as firſt, that they ſweare the truth, and nothing elſe. But the truth of their oath cannot diſpenſe with the Commandement of God, for bidding all ſwearing in ordinary communication. Others that be more ſimple, ſay, they ſweare by good things. But that makes their ſinne the greater: for the goodneſſe of a thing, doth aggravate the offence in the abuſe thereof. Others ſay, that they cannot bee beleeved upon their bare word. *Anſw.* But Chriſts commandement muſt not bee broken, to win credit to our ſpeeches; that credit is deare bought, which is got by pawning the ſoule to the devill: God muſt be obeyed for the matter of our communication, though no man will beleeve us. Others, as Souldiers and young gallants uſe to ſweare to teſtifie their courage and gentrie; theſe men ſhew that they love the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God. But that will be found in the end but ſory reputation, which is gained by tranſgreſſion; *their glory will be their ſhame, and their end damnation*, Phil. 3. 18. nay, their baſe minds and cowardlineſſe are herein evident, that they glory in their ſlaviſh bondage unto ſinne and Satan. Theſe excuſes will not free men from the guilt of condemnation at the day of judgement: for common ſwearing is a ſhamefull taking of Gods name in vain: now the Lord hath ſaid, that *Hee will not hold them guiltleſſe, that take his Name in vaine.* Thoſe therefore that have this way offended, muſt bee true repent of this impiety, and learne to feare the Name of God, making conſcience of an oath, & let their communication bee *yea, yea, and nay, nay*, as Chriſt commanderh. The wicked fact of *Iezabel* covering bloudy impietie under hypocriſie, [e] *in proclaiming a faſt*, when ſhee would have *Naboth* ſlaine for blaſphemy, ſhewes that the cuſtome of thoſe times was to have publike humiliation for ſuch ſinnes, leſt the wrath of God

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e 1 King. 21. 9, 10.

God ſhould come upon our land. And when good king *Hezekias* heard the grievous blaſphemy which *Rabſhakeh* uttered againſt the Lord, [a] *he fell to his prayers, and to humble himſelfe before God*: ſhall this good King doe this for another mans blaſphemy, and ſhall not we doe the like for our owne, but continue in ſwearing without all remorſe. Our common ſwearers are devils incarnate, yea, worſe than the devill himſelfe, for the [b] *devils beleeve God and tremble*; but they teare God in peeces, and are never moved. If men abuſe earthly Princes in their name and titles, they are imprisoned, banniſhed, or hanged; and that juſtly: how ſhall this be done to them that impeach the dignities of mortall men; and ſhall not Gods wrath be hot againſt that people, who live in the continuall blaſphemy of his name? Let us therefore feare to open our mouthes in any kind of common ſwearing, though it be by the baſeſt creature that God hath made: for the leaſt creature is better than we can be allowed to abuſe by our oaths.

a 2 King. 19. 1.

b Iam. 2. 19.

Curſing our ſelves.

Laſtly, here is forbidden all *curſing* of our ſelves in our common talke, as when men ſay, *If it be not ſo, I would I were hanged.*; *I would this bread might be my bane, and ſuch like*; *for every imprecation is a part of an oath*: as wee may ſee in the oaths ſpecified in Scripture: 1 Sam. 25. 22. *So and more alſo, doe God to the enemies of David, &c.* and 2 King. 6. 5. *If I doe not ſo and ſo, then God doe ſo and ſo to me*: now as we are not to ſweare in our common talke, ſo neither ought wee to uſe imprecation therein: for being part of an oath, it ought not to be the matter of our common ſpeech.

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Two caſes wherein an oath is lawfull.

Here two queſtions muſt be skanned: firſt, when a man may lawfully ſweare; and when not? for Chriſts ſpeech forbidding ordinary ſwearing, ſeemes to grant, that there is a time when in a man may lawfully take an oath. There be two times and caſes wherein a man may lawfully take an oath: Firſt, when the Magiſtrate miniſtreth an oath unto a man upon a juſt occaſion: for the Magiſtrate hath the power of God in this caſe, and therefore when hee juſtly requires it of man, then may hee lawfully ſweare. Secondly, when a mans owne calling generall or particular, neceſſarily requires an oath; and this is in foure caſes: 1. When the taking of an oath ſerveth to maintaine, procure, or winne unto God any part of his glory, or to preſerve the ſame from diſgrace. In this regard, *Paul* moved with a godly zeale, uſeth an oath in ſundry of his Epiſtles, for the confirmation of his doctrine, that the Churches to whom he writ might be ſtabliſhed in the truth, and ſo glorifie God the more. 11. When his oath ſerveth to maintaine or further his owne or others ſalvation, or preſervation in ſoule or body: in this caſe [a] *Paul calls God for a record unto his ſoule, that hee came not to Corinth to ſpare them.* And *David* to further himſelfe in the way of ſalvation, [b] *bound himſelfe by an oath, that hee would keepe Gods commandements*: III. When the oath ſerves to confirme and ſtablith peace and ſociety betweene party and party, countrey and countrey, kingdome and kingdome. Thus did *Abraham and Abimelech ſweare each to other*, Gen. 21. 23. and *Iacob and Laban*, Gen. 31. 53. and by vertue hereof doe ſubjects binde themſelves by oath in alleageance to their Princes, and ſouldiers to their Governours. IV. When a man by oath and not otherwiſe, may either free himſelfe from temporall loſſes, or procure to himſelfe temporall benefits which be of great weight and moment: for an oath for confirmation is among men the end of all ſtrife: now wee know that much ſtrife and controverſie doth arife about worldly affaires. And in this regard a man by oath may lawfully purge himſelfe of infamy and ſlander. In theſe foure caſes, a man may lawfully ſweare, not onely publikely before the Magiſtrate, but alſo privately, ſo it be with due reverence and good conſcience. But in common talke, or on light occaſion, a man cannot lawfully ſweare, either by ſmall or great oath, for that is to take the name of God in vaine.

a 2 Cor. 1. 23.

b Pſal. 119. 106.

D

II. Queſt. How muſt a man take an oath, when by juſt occaſion hee is called to ſweare? *Anſ.* To this queſtion the Prophet *Ieremy* anſwereth, chap. 4. 2. *Thou ſhalt ſweare, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgement, and in righteouſneſſe*: where three vertues are required in an holy manner of ſwearing: Firſt, *truth*, and that reſpecteth two things, as well the *matter* whereto we ſweare, for God may not be brought for a witneſſe to a lie; as alſo the minde of him that ſweareth: for his oath muſt be according to his minde, without fraud or deceit, and with intent to performe that truly which hee promiſes thereupon. Secondly, *Juſtice* or *righteouſneſſe*, which alſo reſpecteth two things; firſt, the thing ſwome to, that muſt be juſt and lawfull, and according to Gods Word: ſecondly, the conſcience of the ſwearer: for a man muſt not ſweare for a trifle though the thing be true, but either by the authority of the Magiſtrate, or upon ſome neceſſary cauſe of his lawfull calling: and againſt this vertue doe thoſe ſinne, that ſweare uſually in their common talke, though the thing be true: for trifles and light matters are not a juſt cauſe of an oath. Thirdly, *judgement*, as well of the oath, as of his owne perſon: for the oath; he that ſweareth rightly, ought to know the nature of an oath, and be able to judge of the matter whereabout he ſweareth, and alſo diſcerne rightly of the perſons before whom, of time, place, and other circumſtances. And for his owne perſon, a man that ſweareth, ought to ſee in his conſcience that hee is fit to take an oath, and thereby to worſhip and glorifie God: for hee that ſweareth ought to have his heart ſmitten with feare an awe towards God, as in all other parts of his worſhip: Deut. 10. 20. *the feare of God*, and *ſwearing by his name*, are joyned together: and a prophane man that hath no feare

Three Vertues in an oath.

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feare of God in his heart ought not to sweare. And thus much of Christs generall answer to their false interpretation.

Neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, v. 35. Nor yet by the earth, for it is his footstoole: neither by Ierusalem, for it is the city of the great King, &c. Here our Saviour Christ cometh particularly to forbid swearing in foure severall kindes of oaths used among the Jewes, under which he includeth all indirect oaths by the creatures: and withall observe, that hee addeth severall reasons in prohibiting these severall kindes of indirect oaths: as *that a man must not sweare by heaven, because it is the throne of God, &c.* Now as I take it, Christ doth not directly forbid swearing by the creatures in this place: for his intent is to forbid ordinary swearing in common speech, whether it be by God, or by the creatures; which here hee nameth, because the Jewes counted them but light oaths. Yet here this point must needs be skanned, *whether it be lawfull at any time to sweare by the creatures.* Sundry Papists, and those of the best account both for learning and devotion, make two kinds of oaths, in swearing by the creatures: First, when a man sweares by the creature, and puts it in the place of God, making it a Judge and witnesse to his conscience of the truth of the thing whereof he sweareth: and this doe all condemne as wicked and unlawfull, both Protestants and Papists. Secondly, when the creature is named, but yet the oath is directed to God in the minde of the swearer, under the name of the creature, as the creature is in relation to God a signe of his presence: and this kinde of swearing is taken for lawfull, not onely of all Papists, but of many Protestant Divines which bee of good account in our age. Yet with reverence to them all, I see no reason in the Word of God, to warrant this kinde of swearing by the creature, with direction to God in the minde of him that sweareth. Indeed a man may name the creature in his oath (as *Paul* did, *I call God to record to my conscience*) and yet sweare by God: for it is one thing to name the creature in swearing, and another thing to sweare by the creature.

Whether we may sweare by the creatures. Iansen. concord. Evang. cap. 10. Maimaide confess. Martini ab Aspilcueta. c. 12. num. 4

Reasons against swearing by the creatures. 1

Reasons against this forme of swearing by the creatures, are these: First, an oath is a part of Gods worship, as hath before beene shewed: now every part of Gods worship must be referred to God directly; so we pray and give thanks to God directly, and not in the creature, and so wee ought to sweare; but in indirect swearing by the creatures, the oath is directly referred to the creature, and indirectly unto God, namely, in the creature; which is not lawfull. Secondly, a man must *sweare* [a] *by him that is greater than himselfe*, and therefore [b] *God sware by himselfe, because there was no greater to sweare by*; where it seemeth the holy Ghost takes it for granted, that there is no lawfull swearing by the creatures; because they are not greater than man, and so there must bee but one onely direct kinde of swearing, by God himselfe. Thirdly, Deut. 6. 13. *Thou shalt sweare by my name*: there it seemeth he prescribeth such a forme of swearing, wherein the name of God in some plaine manner is expressed; but in indirect oaths, another besides him that sweareth, cannot tell whether hee sweare by God or no, because the oath is by the creature, and directed to God onely in the minde of him that sweareth. Fourthly, Matth. 23. 21. *Hee that sweareth by the Temple, sweareth by God*: whence I gather, that an indirect oath is superfluous, because it is sufficient that a man sweare by God onely, and not by the creature also.

2 a Heb. 6. 16. b v. 13.

By these reasons I have beene moved to dislike of indirect oaths: now let us see what is said in the behalfe of them. First, it is said, that [c] *Ioseph* a man commended for his faith, *sware by the life of Pharaoh*: therefore men may sweare by the creatures. *Ans.* It may wel be expounded; not to be an oath, but an asseveration to this effect, *as surely as Pharaoh liveth*: but say it is an oath, yet this fact proveth not the lawfulnesse of this kinde of swearing: for no man is so good but he may be tainted with the impieties of the place wherein hee liveth, especially being so wicked a place as *Pharaohs* court was.

c Gen. 42. 16.

Second Reason. 2 King. 2. 4. the Prophet *Elisha sweareth by Eliahs soule. Ans.* That place proveth not the point in hand: for the question is of indirect oaths, where the name of God is concealed: but in that place Gods name is prefixed, *as the Lord liveth, and as thy soule liveth.* Againe, that phrase may be taken for a solemne Asseveration onely, as it is well translated; *as the Lord liveth, and as thy soule liveth, I will not leave thee.*

Reason III. Cantic. 2. 5. There (say they) Christ himselfe sweareth by the creatures; *the Roes and the Hindes of the field. Ans.* Those words are not an oath, but an *admiration*: for Christ chargeth the enemies of his Church not to trouble her; and hee confirmeth his charge by a testimony from the bruit beasts, which may be done without an oath: for it is all one as if he had said, If you doe trouble my Church the Roes and Hindes of the field shall be witnesses against you, because you doe that which they would not doe, if they had reason as you have: now the creatures may be made witnesses unto an Admiration: as Deut. 32. 1. *Moses* calleth *heaven and earth to witnesse*: and so doth the Lord, Isa. 1. 2. but when a man sweareth by a thing, the same is made a witnesse to his conscience, which no creature can be.

Reason IV. Paul (say they) sware by [d] *their rejoycing*, which is a gift of God. *Ans.* Those words, are not an oath, but an obtestation, to testifie the constancie which he shewed in his ministery, and they declared in the confession of their faith: now a testimony may be drawne from a creature, as we shewed before. But (say they) the word there used, is a note of an oath.

d 1 Cor. 15. 31.

Ans.

Not always: for sometimes it betokens an asseveration, as in other authors might be shewed: so that I take it, there ought not to be any indirect oaths wherein Gods name is concealed, and the creature sworne by made a pledge of Gods presence.

Now I come to the reasons, for which Christ forbids these indirect oaths: the summe of them in generall is this; *because Gods name, which must not be taken in vaine, is set in every one of his creatures, even the least haire of a mans head*, (for therein a man may see the wisdome and power of God) *therefore we may not sweare in our common talke, no nor by the least creature that God hath made.*

Instructions. 1 Swearing by faith, truth, bread, drinke, and such like: for faith, (to insist in one) is a gift of God, which beareth Gods name in it: for the matter of our faith is Christ, so as when we sweare by it, we sweare by Christ, whose name wee may not take in vaine; and therefore may not sweare at all by any such oaths. Againe, God hath set his name on every creature, he hath imprinted in them the signes of his power, wisdome, justice and mercy; Rom. 1. 20. *The invisible things of God are seene by his workes*: and Acts 14. 17. *Raine from heaven, and fruitfull seasons, were witnesses unto the Gentiles of Gods goodnesse unto them*: which serveth first to condemne the world of great ingratitude; for we have set before our eyes, we daily taste and handle the good creatures of God, yet who beholds in them his wisdome, mercy and goodnesse, that thereby hee might take occasion to praise his name? for men are like to bruit beasts who use the benefit of the creatures, but yet never thinke on God the Creator; and like unto the swine, who eateth up the mast, but never looketh up to the tree from whence it commeth; yea, some are so shamelesse, that they deny God by their works, though not in word.

2 Meditate on Gods creatures.

Secondly, this teacheth us carefully to meditate upon the creatures of God, labouring therein to see Gods wisdome, justice and mercy, and the rest of his attributes; that hereby we may take occasion to praise his name: Psal. 139. 14. *I will praise thee, for I am wonderfully and fearefully made: marvellous are thy workes, and that my soule knoweth right well*: here the Prophet doth professe: First, that he did meditate on the creatures of God seriously; then, that his meditation made him to feare and to be astonished: and thirdly, to praise God, Psal. 92. 5, 6. *Oh how glorious are thy works!* therein importing that he did meditate thereon; *but the unwise man (saith he) knoweth it not, and a foole doth not understand this*: where he sheweth that it is a great point of folly to see Gods creatures, and not to behold the wonderfull power and goodnesse of God in them. Psal. 145. 5. *I will meditate upon all thy wondrous workes*: and v. 10. *All thy workes praise thee, O Lord.* His example we should follow: And whereas Gods judgements are among us, wee must labour in them to see Gods indignation against our sinnes, and his mercy in chastening us for our amendment, that we might not be condemned with the world.

3

Thirdly, if every creature carry in it some stampe of Gods name, then what should the reasonable creature doe? should not men much more beare Gods image? yes verily, both in thought, will, affection and action: we must therefore seeke to repaire in us Gods image decayed in *Adam*: and above all things take heed we carry not about us the image of the devill in any sinne: for if we doe, we are farre worse than the dumbe creatures.

4 Plea of the ignorant confuted.

Fourthly, whereas every creature beares about some part of Gods image, this serves to strip the ignorant sort of their false plea: who thinke God will hold them excused because they are not booke-learned: but they must know they deceive themselves, for sith they are ignorant of the wisdome, mercy and power of God, and of many other things in God, which the very unreasonable creatures might have taught them, if they had beheld the same, and meditated thereon: they may justly feare, least these silly creatures stand up in judgement against them at the last day.

5 Vse the creatures reverently.

And lastly, seeing God hath set his image in every creature, wee must labour to use them all in an holy manner; as meat, drinke, apparell and such like: we must beware we abuse them not unto our lusts any manner of way, for the abuse redounds unto the Lord whose name they beare, and wee know God will not hold him guiltlesse that taketh his name in vaine.

Now I come more particularly to the severall reasons annexed to the severall prohibitions. The first particular prohibition is this; *Thou shalt not sweare by heaven*: and the reason followeth, *for it is the throne of God.* This reason is to be scanned. A Throne is a chaire of estate wherein earthly Princes use to sit in judgement, and focus themselves in glory and majesty. Now heaven is not properly a Throne, but by resemblance; because that God doth in heaven, and from heaven shew his glory & majesty unto men. In heaven the Saints and Angels behold the unspeakable glory of God. And from heaven doth God shew his exceeding power, even in spreading the heavens like a curtaine above the earth, in setting therein the Sunne, the Moone and Starres, most glorious creatures; in giving particular motions unto them: by sending raine from heaven with stormes, lightnings, and thunder. Againe, hee sheweth his justice from heaven, by powring downe his judgements thence: As the [e] *flood upon the world of the ungodly; fire and brimstone upon Sodome and Gomorrah*: As the Apostle saith, Rom. 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodlinesse and unrighteousnesse of men.* Again, Gods mercy and goodnesse is manifested from heaven,

e 2 Pet. 2. 5, 6.

heaven, *whence cometh every good gift*, Jam. 1. 17. yea, thence our Saviour Christ descended for the worke of our redemption: thence also the holy Ghost descended in Christs baptisme; and the Fathers voyce was heard from thence, pointing out that lambe of God which taketh away the sinnes of the world: and thence shall Christ come again in glory at the last day to be glorified in his Saints: all which doe magnifie unto us the glory of his Throne.

The ofc. Is the Throne of God in heaven, and not on earth? then must we learne to conceive of God, as of an heavenly King: in the chapter following we are taught to call him *our heavenly Father*, v. 9. and therefore when wee speake or thinke of God, or doe worship unto him in prayer or thanksgiving, we must not conceive of him in any carnall sort, but in an heavenly manner. The second Commandement forbidding the representation of God in any similitudes, may teach us, that we must not conceive of God after any earthly or carnall manner. Indeed the Popish Church approving of the images of the Trinitie (as before was shewed) doe thereby teach the people to conceive of God, as of an old man sitting in heaven, with a crowne upon his head, because he is called [d] *the Ancient of dayes*; but all such carnall conceits of God are here forbidden.

d Dan. 7. 13.

How to conceive aright of God. 1 That we may then conceive aright of God, two Rules must be remembred: First, we must not frame in our mindes any image of God at all, as that he should be like unto man, or any other creature: but we must conceive of him both in his workes, as our creator, governour, and preserver; and also in his properties, as most wise, most just, holy, mercifull, and such like. Secondly, we must conceive that God is one in substance, and three in person: we must not confound the persons nor divide the substance, but conceive of one God in three persons, and three persons in one and the same Godhead. These two Rules being well observed, will keepe our hearts from those vaine conceits of God, which many frame to themselves when they thinke of him in their mindes.

An heavenly conversation. Secondly, seeing Gods throne is in heaven, therefore *our conversation must be there also*: for where God is and his throne, there ought our hearts to be. Now wee shall have our conversation in heaven, by doing two things; First, by a continuall elevation of our mindes unto heaven, morning and evening, and at all times when we have occasion: 1 Thess. 4. 17. we are commanded *to pray continually*, and that wee doe, so oft as in the duties of our ordinary calling, wee desire in our hearts the blessing and assistance of God: for the sighs and groanes of the soule are prayers approved before God: wee must therefore lift up our heart to God, as *David* did, Psal. 25. 1. Secondly, wee must set all our affections on God, and on heavenly things, as our love, our joy, and feare, yea, our care must be of comming to heaven: for where can wee be in a more happy place than before Gods throne in heaven, where God sets out his glorie and majesty to his creature?

How we must conceive of Gods providence. Thirdly, hence wee may learne to conceive aright of the providence of God: for God sitting in his majesty in heaven, and being infinite in wisdome, power and greatnesse, doth by a most carefull providence see, know, and governe all things that are done upon the earth: this is notably set forth unto us, Psal. 11. 4. *The Lords throne is in heaven, his eyes will consider, his eye lids will trie the children of men*: the words are very significant, importing that God from heaven doth most narrowly see into all mens dealings and affaires: which teacheth us when we shall be in any distresse, either in body, minds, goods or friends, to behave our selves in an holy manner, for God sees our case: and therefore first wee must make our moane unto him, and humbly intreat for that grace and mercy at his hands whereof we stand in need. *David* maketh this a ground of much comfort in affliction: Psal. 102. 19, 20. *Out of heaven* (saith he) *did the Lord beholde the earth, that he might heare the mourning of the prisoner, and deliver the children of death*.

A terror to sinners. Lastly, this serveth to terrifie every sinner: for the Lord sits in heaven with a piercing eye, beholding all thy doings whatsoever thou art; and there fore when a man sinneth, though hee hide the same from men, yet the Lord sees him, and will reprove him, and judge him: let us therefore make conscience of all sinne, and feare to doe evill, either by thought, word, or deed, seeing wee are before the Judge that sits upon this throne.

Verse 35. The second particular prohibition is, *against swearing by the earth*; the reason is, *because it is the Lords foot-stoole*. The earth is the Lords foot-stoole, not properly, but by resemblance; because as the footstoole is nothing in glory to the throne, no more be those glimpses of glory, which God shewes here on earth, comparable to that surpassing dignity and glory, wherein God manifests himselfe in heaven.

Instruction. 1 Gods omnipresence. Is the earth the Lords footstoole? then is he not included in heaven, but is present also upon earth: God is not in one place alone, but he is every where at one and the same time. Here then we have a plaine proofe of Gods infinite greatnesse and omnipresence, in regard of his essence and godhead; for Christ compares him to a King, who is of that bignesse, that hee fils heaven with his glory; and of that height, that the earth below is his footstoole, according as he saith, Jeremi. 23. 23. *I fill heaven and earth*. This point *David* proves at large, Psal. 139. 7, 8. *Whither shall I goe from thy presence, &c?* shewing plainely, that there is no place whereof it can be truly said, that God in essence is not there present. The consideration whereof teacheth us:

First, to understand aright that saying of *Paul*,

Paul, Act. 17. 28. *In him we live, move, and have our being*: we are not in God as parts of God; for his essence is most simple; and yet it is true we are in God, because his essence is every where: it is in us, forth of us, and about us, and being in us, and about us, gives us living, being and moving.

2 A right conceiving of Gods providence. Secondly, this teacheth us to conceive aright of Gods holy providence; to wit, that God in regard of his substance, is in every place, giving being, life, and moving to all things that be, live, and move; preserving them, and killing them at his pleasure, and doing whatsoever he will.

3 A ground of feare and obedience. Thirdly, this consideration of Gods essentiall presence, serves to kindle in our hearts that feare of God, which is the ground of true obedience in all estates. If God shall lay upon us any affliction, either in bodie or minde, friends, or goods, let us then consider the essentiall presence of God, laying that crosse upon us, and it will strike into our hearts a reverent feare of God, and move us to patience, meeknesse, and contentation; yea, it will cause us to humble our selves under his hand: for the cause why men flie not to God, by humbling themselves in their afflictions, is because they thinke God is farre off. Againe, if in prosperitie we consider Gods essentiall presence with us, giving unto us all good things, it will make us thankfull: so much we doe unto man, when we be in his presence that hath bestowed a favour upon us, we readily addresse our selves to thankfulnesse: and shal we not doe so to God? In a word, this holy meditation of Gods presence, will make us to humble our selves unto God, and to rest contented with his good will and pleasure.

4 No difference of place for worship in regard of holinesse. Fourthly, if God in essence be present everie where, then it is needlesse to make choice of places in regard of holinesse, for the worship of God; for one place is no more necre to God than another: which confutes the vanity of Popish Pilgrimages to chiefe places for religious worship: and it checketh also the blinde opinion of many among us, who thinke the Church is the onely place of prayer and other parts of Gods worship; whereupon they never regard to pray in their private houses. But God is in thee, and in thy house, as well as in the Church, and therefore thou maist lift up pure hands into God in all places, and must pray at home, as well as in the Church (alwaies provided that thou honour Gods ordinance in the publike assemblies.)

5 Thinke on Gods presence. Fifthly, if God be every where, then we must labour to have hearts affected with this persuasion, that wherosoever we be, God is present with us. This lesson God taught *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 1. *Walke before me, and be upright*: and this *Enoch* had learned long before, Gen. 5. 24. and therefore *was reported of, that he had pleased God*, Heb. 11. 5. Now where this persuasion taketh place, it will strike the heart with a reverent feare and awe towards God, making a man thus to reason; God is present with me, how then should I doe this evill in his sight? Oh that this thought did run in our mindes in the time of temptation, then by Gods grace we should feare to sinne, and endevour to walke before God in all holy obedience, as his servants have done. Many are shamelesse in sinning, which comes from the want of this persuasion of Gods presence, which should strike this feare into their hearts, as we may see, Gen. 20. 11. Psal. 10. 3, 4. 11. and 94. 6, 7.

6 An helpe against the feare of the Devill. Sixthly, this knowledge of Gods presence, serves to quiet and strengthen their hearts that are troubled with feare of the Devill, thus they must reason with themselves; the Lord my God is present with me, both in power and essence, he can binde Sathan, and he will keepe those that trust in him from the share of the hunter, wherefore then should I be afraid?

11. Instruct. A ground of an humble and penitent life. Secondly, is the earth the Lords footstoole? then while wee live here upon the earth, *our lives ought to be a daily practice of humiliation and repentance*: when good subjects come before the chaire of estate, especially if the Prince be present, then they bow their bodies, to testifie their loyall subjection unto their Prince; shall man doe this to man, and shall not wee, whose dwelling is at the Lords footstoole, much more humble our selves? When *Davids* wroth was kindled against *Nabal*, *Abigail Nabals* wife being wiser than her husband, went to meet *David* with a present, and so soon as she saw him, [f] *she lighted of her asse, and fell downe upon her face, and bowed her selfe unto the ground, and fell at his feet, and besought him humbly to forget the trespasse, and to stay his hand from blood*: so likewise when *Iacob* met his brother *Esau*, [g] *He bowed himselfe seven times, to move him to compassion towards him and his family*: how much more then ought we to bow our selves before the Lord, who have ten thousand fold more deserved his wrath than *Nabal* did *Davids*, or *Iacob Esaus*? and besides, our humble walking before him at his footstoole here on earth, may give us assurance, that one day he will place us on his throne in glorie in the heavens. But if we walke proudly before him in the practice of sinne, being at his footstoole, let us know that *he hath feet like unto frie brasse burning in a furnace*, Rev. 1. 15. under which he will trample all his enemies, and make them his footstoole, Psal. 110. 1.

f 1 Sam. 25. 23, 24, 28.

g Gen. 33. 3.

Jerusalem is Gods city, though abounding with corruption. The third inhibition, is *from swearing by Ierusalem*: the reason is, *for it is the citie of the great King*: that is, the citie of God, the King of Kings: for God had chosen the Iewes to be his peculiar people; and Jerusalem for his holy citie where he had his Temple, and sacrifices for his solemne worship. Now here observe, that at this time, the *Temple was made a denne of Theeves*, and many of the Scribes, and Jewish teachers were notable Heretikes, erring against the foundation of religion; yea, the people, were rebellious and wicked, as Steven plainely telleth them, Act. 7. 51. and yet Christ here

calleth Jerusalem the citie of God; and so the people, Gods people; though they for their parts had forsaken God. The reason hereof is this, because neither the Jewes, nor any other doe then presently cease to bee the people of God, when they by sin cut off themselves from God, and forsake him; but then doe they cease to be Gods people, when God forsakes them, and cuts them off from him: like as in the state of matrimonie, when either man or wife commits adulterie, the partie breakes the bond of marriage, and as much as in him lyeth, cuts off himselfe from the other: but yet while the partie innocent retaines matrimoniall affection towards the partie offending, and gives not a Bill of divorce, they still remaine man and wife. This appeares in these Jewes, whom neither Christ himselfe did then forsake, when they rejected him, (for he prayed for them when they crucified him) nor yet his Apostles, till they saw in them manifest signes of incurable obstinacy, Act. 13. 46.

When a people cease to be Gods people.

This point must be remembred, as serving to rectifie our judgements touching the state of a Church or people, that have many grievous wants and faults among them, both for doctrine and manners: for though a people doe what in them lyeth, to cut off themselves from God, yet till God cut them off from him, they cease not to be his people: and therefore we must not judge them to be no people of God, till we see that God hath cut them off. And to apply this to our owne Church: put case we had forsaken God, and had amongst us all those abuses which some would fasten upon us, as making us to be no Church; yet this proves us not to be no Church, neither ought we for all this to be so reputed: for though we have deserved indeed that God should cut us off, yet seeing he vouchsafeth unto us the doctrine of life, and the pledges of salvation, it cannot be truly said, that we are no Church. If it be said, that by this reason we will make the Church of Rome to bee Gods Church, because they have some signes of Gods favour, as Baptisme and the Word, though grievously corrupted. *Answ.* Though I doubt not but God hath his companie in the middest of Poperie, yet if we understand by the Church of Rome, a companie of men who professe and hold the Pope for their head, and embrace the doctrine established by the Councell of Trent, then (I say) they are no Church: for Christ hath cut them off, and given them a Bill of divorcement in his holy Word, Rev. 18. 4. *Come out of her my people,*

Brownists.

Rome no true Church.

Hence also we are taught to carrie a charitable opinion of such particular persons, as goe on in sinne without remorse: for though they for their part have forsaken God, yet we know not, whether God hath forsaken them: he may in mercie call them to repentance, and therefore we must not rashly give sentence of judgement against them. *Quest.* But what if a man give himselfe to the Devill by covenant, as many have done, and doe daily, may wee not then give sentence against them, or they against themselves? *Answ.* No verily: for though this case be most fearefull, yet they have not absolute power over themselves: *Manasses* [a] King of Juda had most wickedly forsaken God, and bound himselfe in league to the Devill; but yet when he humbled himselfe being in affliction, and prayed to God, he was received to mercie. *Sauls* case was fearefull, while [b] *he made havocke of the Church*; and yet the Lord converted him when he went to persecute. This must not embolden any to goe on in sinne, for the *Lord will not be mercifull unto such*, Deuter. 29. 19.

Charitie towards the impenitent.

a 2 Chr. 33. 6. 12.

b Act. 9. 13.

Neither shalt thou sweare by thine head. This is the last forme of swearing forbidden by Christ: the reason, *Because thou canst not make one haire white or blacke*: that is, thou shalt not sweare by thine head, because thou hast not power over thine owne head, thou art not able to make thine head; nay, thou canst not make one haire of thine head: nay, (which is lesse) thou canst not give to any haire his naturall colour, by making it either white or blacke.

Vers. 36.

Where observe the honour given to God, not onely to make the haires of mans head, but even to give a naturall colour to every one of them: man can not doe the least of these things.

This teacheth us, first, that there is a particular providence of God, whereby he disposeth of all things, even of the least and basest things that be in the world: for what is more base than the haire of a mans head? and what is lesse to be regarded than the colour thereof? and yet the Lords providence reacheth hereunto. This is a matter of endlesse comfort to Gods children: for when we are once perswaded of the particular providence of God over so base and light things, we shall easily be resolved that all things which befall us in this life, whether in prosperitie or adversitie, come by Gods speciall providence: which will move us to a patient bearing of all miseries, and to contentment in every estate, because it is the Lords sending; yea, this will be a notable comfort in any affliction to know that God is the author thereof.

Gods particular providence proved.

Secondly, hath not man power over the least creature, no not over the haire of his head? then doubtlesse he may not lawfully sweare by any creature, though he have relation to God therein: for if hee might lawfully sweare by a creature, it were because he might present that creature unto God, as a pledge of his presence, wherein he desires God to punish him, if he faile in his oath. This is granted of those that defend this forme of swearing: but a man may not lay downe any creature, as a pawne before God, and appoint the Lord to punish him therein; because the creature is not in mans power: every creature is the Lords, and we may not

Against swearing by the creatures.

not appeare him how he shall punish us for our perjurie. If it be said, that the oath made by the creature is a binding oath, which must be kept, for Christ calls it an oath, Mat. 23. 20. and therefore a man may lawfully use it. *Ans.* The reason is not good: for the oath bindeth and must be kept, because indirectly a man sweares by God, and so in substance it is an oath; but yet the manner of it is unlawfull, because an oath being part of Gods worship, ought to be directed unto God immediately: when an Infidell sweares by his false gods (as [c] *Laban did by the god of Nahor*) that is an oath, and it binds his conscience, because in his intent he sware by the true God; and yet the forme of it is unlawfull, because he puts that in the roome of God, which is not God.

c Gen. 31. 53.

Thirdly, is the haire of the head the creature of God, and the naturall colour his workmanship? then all abuse hereof must needs be unlawfull: as First, the custome of those men or women, who being ashamed of Gods workemanship in their owne haire, doe beautifie their heads with bought haire, sometime of dead persons. This is an odious thing, and such persons take Gods name in vaine, as much as they which sweare by their head at every word: for be they what they will be, God in some sort hath set his owne name in the naturall colour of their haire, which none ought to be ashamed of. Secondly, the painting of faces, and colouring of the haire, is another abuse of Gods name set therein. This practice was abhorred of the heathen, who in their writings have branded *Poppaea Nero's* wife, because she used an oynment made of Asses milke, to make her face faire and bright: what then shall we say of our ladies and gentlewomen, who paint their faces with Spanish white, and colour their haire? These doubtles beleeve not Gods Word, which *Preferreth the feare of God before favour and beautie*, Pro. 31. 30. But yet me thinkes they should be ashamed to be followers of *Iezabel*, 2 King. 8. 30. Thirdly, the wearing of long haire is another abuse thereof, in the younger sort: it began indeed among the aged, but now it is become a tricke of youth, and is the badge of a proud heart: for how can they say they glorifie God thereby, when the Apostle saith, *It is a shame for a man to have long haire.* Well, sith God hath set his name therein, we must beware how we make it an instrument of sinne. If it be said, to weare long haire is our English fashion: I answer, It is not our ancient English fashion, but indeed it is a forren tricke, and therefore as unlawfull as forren attire which God condemnes, Zeph. 1. 8. Our ancient English fashion (except it were among the aged) was to weare short haire: and in everie countrey, the most ancient and grave fashions ought to be followed; not onely in the use of the haire, but in apparell also, that therein men may shew the grace of their heart: for mans attire is Gods ordinance, borrowed from his creatures, wherein God hath set his name: and therefore we ought not to deface it, with the stampe of pride and vanitie; but rather shew therein, that libertie and modestie, that may honour Gods name.

Abuse about the haire of the head.

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Plin. nat. hist. L. 11. c. 41. & L. 28. c. 12.

v. 37 *Let your communication be yea, yea; and nay, nay: for whatsoever is more cometh of evill.*

This verse containeth two parts: A rule for the framing of our speech in common talke; and a Reason thereof. The Rule is this, *Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay*: where he sheweth that though men may not sweare in their common talke, yet they may use a simple affirmation, or negation to the thing they speak. This Rule is diversly expounded: some take it to respect the truth of our speech, as if Christ had said; Whatsoever you affirme in speaking, affirme it truly; and whatsoever you deny in speaking, deny it truly. But by the circumstances of the place, it rather seemeth, that Christ here propoundeth a Rule for the very forme of our common talke, to this effect; If you would affirme any thing in your ordinarie speech, let your affirmation be yea; and if you would deny any thing, let your negation or denial be no, and in your ordinarie communication say no more, though you be urged thereto. So must we take *communication*, for ordinarie talke: for in some cases it hath beene lawfull to sweare, as hath beene shewed.

A rule of communication.

First, by this Rule is condemned the adding of invocations to our common affirmations or negations: as *O Lord, yea: nay, good God*, and such like. In some cases, and at some times these may be used: but in ordinary and familiar communication, these invocations are abuses of Gods name. An earthly Prince will not suffer his name to be tossed in every mans mouth; and much lesse will the Lord, who herein is jealous of his glorie.

The rule. 1. Invocations in communication unlawfull.

Secondly, here note, that asseverations may not be ordinarily used in common talke; as *verily yea, no in truth*, and such like: these are more than simple affirmations and negations; and therefore in common speech may not be used. Our Saviour Christ, the patterne of pietie, never used them but in weightie matters, which were carefull to be remembred; and then hee said, *Verily, verily, I say unto you.*

2. Asseverations.

Thirdly, here is condemned the use of *execrations*, when we affirme or deny a thing in our common talke; as to say, *Yea, or else I would I were dead*, and such like.

3. Execrations.

Fourthly, *ordinarie swearing* is here against plainely forbidden, whether it be by the name of God, or by other creatures. Some to avoid swearing, (as they thinke) in their common talke, for yea, and nay, use to say, *by yea*, and *by no*; but herein they offend: for these phrases are oaths,

4. Ordinarie swearing.

oaths, as well *by faith*, and *by troth*: and in a word all speeches in common talke, added to confirme our speech, above *yea* and *nay*, are abuses against this Rule of Christ, for ordinarie communication.

For whatsoever is more than these, that is, whatsoever exceedeth a simple affirmation or negation in common speech *comes of evill*: that is, of the evill one, the Devill: so chap. 6. 13. *Deliver us from evill*: that is, from the Devill, that evill one. This is a most excellent reason, to move men to put in practice this Rule: for all abuses of oaths, asseverations, invocations, and deprecations, in common speech, are abuses of Gods name, and they come from the Devill, he is the schoole-master that teacheth men to use them.

Quest. Whether doth every temptation come from the Devill? *Ans.* Every temptation to evill is of the Devill; so much this Text proveth: and Matth. 4. 3. the *Devill* is called the *Tempter*, because he gives himselfe to tempt all men, by all meanes at all times. True it is, that some temptations come from our corrupt hearts, but yet the Devill hath an hand in them to further them. *Quest.* How can this be, seeing the Devill is but one, and can be but in one place at once? *Ans.* There is indeed one head of wicked spirits, called *Beelzebub*, and *the Devill*, who hath innumerable wicked angels ministring unto him, as may be gathered, Matth. 25. 41. where *hell is said to be prepared for the Devill and his angels*: and it is not unlike, but they are more in number, than all the men upon the earth: for where can any man be in this life, but some wicked spirit will be readie to tempt him unto sin? doth he not provoke the filthy person to uncleannesse, and every man to such sinne, whereunto he is most inclined? And say the evill motion arisseth from our owne corruption, yet the Devils helpe is never wanting to bring it into action.

Vse 1. Devils set about us though unseene.

This serveth to confute the folly of our common people, who never feare the Devill, but when hee appeares unto them in some shape: they thinke he is never neere them, but when they see him: but they must know that the Devill by his wicked spirits, is alwaies about them day and night, and in all places: and therefore they must learne more to feare his temptations, than his appearance: for that is not so terrible to the sight, as his temptations are hurtfull to the soule. Secondly, this presence of the Devill with every man, to tempt him at all times, must teach us to keepe strait watch against all sinne, and the occasions thereof: we are easily persuaded to watch against theeves that would deprive us of our temporall goods, or naturall life: now the Devill our spirituall enemy, is daily about us, to seeke the ruine of our soules, and therefore wee must alwaies have an eye to his temptations. And indeed, if wee would well consider his presence, and malice against us, it would make us watch and feare, lest he should take us in his snare.

2

But why is the Devil called the evil one? *Ans.* By a kinde of excellencie of speech, for these reasons: First, because he is evill in excesse, his sins are in the highest degree: for it is like, his first sinne was directly against the holy Ghost, which may be one reason, why God chose not Angels, but men, on whom he would shew mercie after their fall. Secondly, because hee commits evil and wickednesse without ceasing, and therefore is compared to an [a] *hunger-bitten Lyon, who goeth about continually, seeking whom he may devoure*. The most wicked man that is, or ever was, will sometime doe good: [b] *Pharaoh* humbled himselfe, and confessed his sins to *Moses*: and [c] *Saul desires to worship God with Samuel*: *Herod* also heard *John Baptist* [d] *gladly, and did many things* according to his Ministerie: but the Devill herein differs from all wicked men, that he doth nothing but practise wickednesse; he is alwaies murthering, and never ceaseth to seeke mens destruction. Thirdly, because he practiseth sins of all sorts and degrees, in himselfe, and by his Ministers: for the sins that be in the world, be all from him, either originally, or by furtherance. The vilest man that is, doth abstaine from sin sometime; yea, by nature he hateth some sins: the proud and prodigall man cannot abide covetousnesse; and the drunkard may abhorre idolatrie; but the Devill continually practiseth sinnes of all sorts; and therefore is justly called the *evill one*.

a 1 Pet. 5. 8.

b Exod. 10. 16.

c 1 Sam. 15. 30.

d Mat. 16. 20.

3

Here then we may see a reason, why we are called the *children of wrath, and of the Devill by nature*: namely, because by nature we carrie in us, and about us, as lively an image of the Devill in sin, as any childe doth of his naturall father. For first, in our conception we are guilty of *Adams* sin, in eating the forbidden fruit. Secondly, our nature is stayned with original sinne, which is (not a practice, but) a proneness to all manner of mischiefe and wickednesse, that is committed in the world. Seest thou a man kill his father or mother, or betray his master, as *Judas* did to Christ, though it may be, thou abhorrest such sinnes, yet doubtlesse the seed thereof is in thee: yea, if God in mercie did not keepe us from it, our corruption would carrie us to the blasphemie against the Spirit. And thirdly, from this naturall corruption, doe arise innumerable evill thoughts, words, and deeds, in the course of our lives, in all which we beare the image of the Devill, till God bring us to repentance; and therefore justly may we be called the children of wrath, and of the Devill by nature, having the same corruption in us, that is in the Devill, though not in the same degree and manner.

Why Christ is called the evill one.

Why we are called the children of wrath, and of the Devill.

Vse 1

Hence we learne, First, to be ashamed and confounded in our selves, yea, to hang downe our heads: for what cause hath he to be puffed up with selfe-love, that is by nature in himselfe like to the Devill? Secondly, this teacheth us above all things, to labour to have the image of God

2

God renued in us, in righteousnesse, and true holinesse, which was lost in *Adam*; that so the devils image, in sin and wickednes, may be defaced. Thirdly, this must cause us to make no account of any worldly thing, that pertaineth to us; but all our joy must be in Christ, he must be our wisdome, and righteousnesse, our riches, and all things else, because by him we are renued from the devils likenesse to the image of God.

3

v. 38. *Yee have heard that it hath beene said, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, &c.*

Here Christ returnes to the commandements of the second Table, intending to restore the same to their proper sense, and withall to confute the erroneous interpretation thereof, given by the Jewish Teachers. And first, he commeth to a particular Judiciall Law of *Moses*, pertaining to the sixth commandement, touching the *Requitall of like for like*: in which, as in the former, he first sets downe the words of the law of *Moses*, but yet to be understood, with the erroneous interpretation of the Scribes and Pharisees, v. 38. then, he gives the right sense of that law, and withall confuteth the false interpretation of the Jewish Teachers, v. 39, 40, 41.

Moses law of like for like expounded.

For the first, the words of *Moses* law here set downe, *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, are written, Exod. 21. 24. whereto, as to the former, Christ prefixeth this preface, *Ye hath beene said*, thereby giving us to understand that hee is about to lay downe the Law of God, in the false sense of the Jewish Teachers: for the better perceiving whereof, wee must observe the true meaning of that law: *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*: wherein the Lord requireth requitall of like for like, not by every private man, but by the publike Magistrate. As if a man did put out his neighbours eye, then the Magistrate should put out his eie; and strike out his teeth that strikes out his neighbours teeth: this appeares to be so, because revenge is *directly forbidden to every private person*, and plainely appropriated to the Judge, Deut. 19. 18, 19, 21. But the Jewish Teachers expounded this law of private revenge; as though God had said to every private man, If thy neighbour plucke out thine eye, pluck out his againe; and if he strike out thy tooth, strike thou out his tooth: this is the false interpretation of the Jewes. *Quest.* How could they so farre overshoot themselves in so cleere a case, seeing in all the bookes of *Moses*, it is plainely referred to the Magistrate? *Ans.* There may bee two reasons given thereof: First, it is a naturall opinion, that a man may revenge himselfe in his owne cause privately, and not wait for recompence of the Magistrate; and answerable hereunto, there is a mighty strong desire of revenge in every mans heart by nature; when he is injured: now it is like, that these Jewes followed their corrupt nature, and heady affections, in

Deut. 19. 18.

A the interpretation of this law. Against the Jewish people were mightily given to revenge; by their naturall disposition, as may appeare by the law of the Cities of Refuge, and by mentioning of the Revenger of bloud: which plainly imports, that the Jewes would have bloud-a-game of him that shed bloud; wheresoever they met with him. Now the Jewish Teachers framed their doctrine to the common disposition and behaviour of their people, and so fulfilled the truth of God, as many times it falls out, that the common practice of men makes sinne to seeme no sinne.

Vse 1. Tempering religion to mens humours a Satanical policy.

In the person of these Jewish Teachers, wee may see the politie of the devill, whose intent is and hath beene in all ages, to overturne religion: and to this end, he endeavours to cause men to temper religion to their naturall disposition and common opinion in outward manners; whereby hee overturneth both religion and people. This appeares in other praises among the Jewes, as well as in this case of revenge. They were a people given much to covetousnesse, as may appeare by the law of toleration for taking usury of strangers, and by their hardnesse of heart, so much reproved by all the Prophets. Now the Devill perceiving this to be their naturall disposition, makes Gods doctrine of salvation, seeme to them a doctrine of earthly benefits: for hee caused them to dreame of an earthly King for their Messias, and of an earthly flourishing Kingdome under him. Thus also hath the devill dealt with other heathen people: The Romans in Italy, have beene ever grosly addicted to superstition, sorcery, and idolatry, as heathen writers doe testifie. Now though God vouchsafed them his true Religion in the primitive Church, yet the devill perceiving their naturall disposition to superstition, hath so tempered the truth of God among them, with a naturall and superstitious religion, that now they abound as much in idolatry and superstition, as ever they did when they were heathen. The like malicious practice doth the devill shew among the Protestants, where the Gospell is truly preached; for though he cannot (as he desires) corrupt religion in the mouthes of the Teachers; yet hee weakens it greatly in the hearts of men, both Teachers and hearers, causing them so farre forth onely to receive it, as it is suitable to their nature and disposition: but where it crosseth their humors, there to leave it. Is not this evident? for he that embraceth the truth with his heart, will frame his life according to it; but generally the entertainment of religion is only formall: for though men professe it, yet they live in their sinnes, they make it to jump with their naturall disposition having indeed a shew of godlinesse, but they want the power thereof; and so in them religion is vaine, Jam. 1. 26. Wherefore we may be advertised, to take heed of this policy of the devill, and whereas he labours to draw some religion to mens dispositions, wee on the contrary must

Formal profession.

devout in all things to transforme our selves into religion, obeying *that forme of doctrine, wherewnto we are delivered*, Rom. 6. 17.

Secondly, in these Scribes and Phariſes wee obſerve the property of a bad Teacher: namely, to tranſtorme himſelfe and his doctrine, to the cuſtome and manners of the people, when as the people ſhould bee tranſformed into his doctrine and practice, according to godlineſſe. Hereof the Lord admoniſheth *Jeremy*, [f] *Let them returne to thee, but returne not thou to them*: for it was the practice of the falſe prophets in his time, thus to [g] *ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked*: and it is a common fault in many Teachers, that they frame themſelves, both for doctrine and practice, to the cuſtome and manners of the people: but this is the devils policy, whereby he overthroweth religion, and deſtroieth mens ſoules.

Anſwer of a bad Teacher.

[f] Jer. 15. 19.

[g] Jer. 23. 14.

V. 39 *But I ſay unto you, reſiſt not evill: but whoſoever ſhall ſtrike thee on thy right cheeke, turne to him the other alſo.*

In this, and the three next verſes, Chriſt confutes the falſe interpretation of this law. The ſumme of his anſwer ſtands in two points; the firſt is an inhibition, *reſiſt not evill*, which is explained by three examples in the words following; The ſecond, is a commandement to requite good for evill, v. 44.

Exposition.

For the firſt, by *evill* is meane, the *injury or wrong* that is done to man; or more properly, *the evill one*; that is, the evill man that doth the wrong. *Reſiſt not*; that is, reſiſt not againſt the evill one, to requite like for like, according to the injury he hath done unto thee: ſo in ſuch the word ſignifieth. Now Chriſt forbiddeth not reſiſting evill by a lawfull defence, but by way of private revenge: for he ſpeaketh to his Diſciples, and to private men, ſaying, *I ſay unto you which hear*, (as Saint *Luke* hath it, chap. 6. 27.) Yet further to cleare this interpretation, wee muſt know, the Scripture mentioneth two kinds of revenge, *Publike* and *Private*. *Publike revenge* is, when the Magiſtrate according to juſtice, and the law of God, puniſheth an evill perſon that wronged his brother. *Private revenge* is, when thoſe that are no Magiſtrates, will revenge themſelves on ſuch as doe them wrong. The *publike revenge* is allowed by S. *Paul*, calling the *Magiſtrate* [h] *Gods Miniſter, to the executing of revenge upon evildoers*. *Private revenge*, is forbidden by the ſame Apoſtle, [i] *Revenge not thy ſelfe*. Now by this doctrine is plaine, that our Saviour Chriſt here forbiddeth revenge, meaneth not publike, but *private revenge*.

Meanings.

Revenge is of 2. kinds. 1. Publike.

2. Private.

[h] Rom. 13. 4.

[i] Rom. 12. 17.

The vſe. Magiſtracy lawfull.

First, here we ſee those men confuted, who thinke it unlawfull for a Chriſtian to be a Magiſtrate, to execute revenge upon maleſactours by the ſword, or to make warre againſt the common enemies: theſe men are deceived, by miſtaking this text, which forbiddeth onely private, and not publike revenge. Secondly, here wee ſee, that all private revenge is flatly condemned, as a ſin againſt the ſixth commandement. This point muſt bee remembred, becauſe it is our naturall opinion, and our hearts deſire to requite like for like in private cauſes, when we are injured.

Now that wee may ſee more into this ſinne, we are to know that private revenge is two-fold; Inward, and Outward: *Inward private revenge* is a purpoſe in the heart, to doe a man an evill turne; this is commonly called the bearing of a grudge, and it is here condemned. *Outward revenge* is, when the ſpite of the heart comes into action, either by word or deed: by word, when a man gives out threatning ſpeeches: as *that hee will ſit on his ſkirt*, or *be even with him, iſfat lie in his lot*, and ſuch like; or uſeth cuſing ſpeeches, as *a plague take thee, a murren or peſtilence light upon thee*: or rayleth or chideth, calling another *knave, villaine, &c.* By deed and action men ſhew outward revenge, when they be at a word and a blow, uſing to fight, and to ſtrike one another, by way of private revenge. Hereto alſo we may referre an ordinarie bad practice of ſome Magiſtrates and Superiours, though (it may be) few thinke it to bee a fault; to wit, when the Magiſtrate doth aggravate the puniſhment upon a maleſactour, for ſome private grudge he beareth to him: for then he uſeth private revenge: as alſo when Parents or Maſters correct their ſervants and children in fury and rage; for though they be publike perſons in this regard, yet to give correction in a chollericke mood, is to caſe the heart by way of revenge.

Here then wee muſt learne, that wee may not requite evill for evill, in thought, word, or deed, to thoſe that doe us wrong, any manner of way, but muſt rather ſuffer injury, and referre the revenge unto God that judgeth righteouſly. And becauſe this duty goes againſt our naturall diſpoſition, I will uſe ſome reaſons to perſwade our hearts to yeeld unto it: Firſt, the Apoſtle teacheth out of Deuteronomie, that [k] *vengeance is the Lords*: if then we ſhall privately revenge our ſelves, we rob God of his right, and ſo ſin againſt the firſt commandement. Secondly, in the next words he addeth, *and I will repay, ſaith the Lord*: where God takes upon him to be our debtor in the caſe of injuſtice, and therefore when wee are wronged, we muſt not be raſh to revenge our ſelves, but muſt wait with patience upon the Lord, laying downe our injury at his feet; for he will repay in due time, to them that have wronged us. Thirdly, conſider the examples of worthy men in this caſe: for our Saviour Chriſt never ſought revenge, but bare *wrongs patiently, committing all to him that judgeth righteouſly*,

Matth. 5. verſ. 39.

2 Private revenge unlawfull.

Kindes of private revenge. 1. Inward.

2. Outward.

Vſe 1.

Reaſons againſt private revenge.

1

[k] Rom. 12. 19.

2

3

ly, leaving us an example to doe likewiſe, 1 Pet. 2. 10. Yea, when hee was cruelly and unjuſtly crucified, he *prayed for his perſecutors*, Luke. 23. 34. *Steven* alſo *prayed for them that ſtoned him*, Acts 7. 26. and *David*, though a King, would not ſuffer revenge to bee taken on *Shimei that curſed him*, 1 Sam. 19. 9, 10. neither would hee ever touch *Saul*, who ſought his life, though he had him [l] often in his hands: nay, [m] *his heart ſmote him for cutting off the lap of his coat*: ſo ſore was he from ſeeking revenge. Fourthly, in the fifth petition wee pray, *Forgive us our ſinnes, as wee forgive our treſpaſſes*: but if wee carrie grudging in our hearts, wee pray God not to forgive us, but to condemne us; for we will not forgive, but bee revenged on them that offend us. Now this is a moſt fearefull caſe, that a man ſhould pray for vengeance upon himſelfe. Fifthly, it is not meet in common reaſon, that the ſame partie ſhould be the accuſer and the Judge; and yet, if a man might revenge himſelfe, this ſhould be ſo: and therefore, if wee would bee Chriſts Diſciples, wee muſt arme our ſelves with patience, in ſuffering wrong, and referre revenge to God that judgeth righteouſly.

1 Sam. 24. 5, 6.

2 Chap. 26. 9, 10.

4

Yet ſome will ſay, If we alwayes put up and ſuffer wrong, wee ſhall never be at quiet, but ſtill bee abuſed. *Anſw.* Though in our owne perſon we may not revenge our ſelves, yet wee may crave the helpe of the Magiſtrate, either for the preventing, or for the puniſhment of wrong done unto us: for the Magiſtrate is Gods Lieutenant, to releeve the oppreſſed, and to execute vengeance on maleſactours: thus did [n] *Paul ſend to the chiefe Captaine*, to prevent a conſpiracie that the Jewes intended againſt him, and [o] *appealed to Cæſar*, to avoid the danger of the Jewes at Jeruſalem: and yet when wrong is done unto us, wee muſt beare it patiently, without ſeeking private revenge, although the wrong wore doubled or trebled upon us.

[n] Acts 23. 17.

[o] Acts 25. 10.

Wrong doing the properties of an evillman.

Thirdly, our Saviour Chriſt in calling the wrong doer *an evill one*, giveth us to underſtand, that it is the properties of an evill man to doe wrong unto others; and this title is given to the wrong doer, to teach us, that wee muſt ſuffer wrong patiently, though he be an evill man that offereth it unto us. It is the properties of a good man to doe good continually, but to doe wrong is the marke of an evill man, who herein is like the Devill: which muſt teach us not to doe wrong to any one, in his bodie, goods, or name, either by word or deed; but rather apply our ſelves to doe all the good wee can, to every one within the compaſſe of our calling. Hereby wee ſhall ſee what our eſtate is, for if in our callings wee ſet our ſelves to hurt others, either by word or deed, wee are out of the ſight of Gods evill men: ſuch are our Uſurers, and Extortioners, and all thoſe that uſe fraud and deceit in their callings. But if wee would ſhew our ſelves to bee good men, approved of God in Chriſt, then we muſt referre our bredies and ſoules, and all that wee have, to the good of others. Although men by nature bee like to [p] *ſavage beaſts, as Lyons, Woolves, Cockatrices, &c.* whoſe properties is, to devoure and hurt other creatures, yet when it pleaſeth God to receive them to mercie, and to place them in his kingdome, then they lay aſide their cruell nature, and live peaceably one with another; for *in the mountaine of Gods holineſſe, none ſhall hurt or deſtroy*, verſe 9. It is a prophecie of Chriſts kingdome, that therein *the ſword and ſpeare*, which be weapons of war, *ſhall be turned into ſithes and mattocks*, which are inſtruments of common good in time of peace; whereby was ſignified, that when men are converted, and become true children unto God, they lay aſide all malice, and give themſelves to doe good, and become ſerviceable unto all for the good of all. This was notably verified in *Paul*, who of a [q] *perſecutor became a preacher*: yea, [r] *he became all things to all men, that by all meanes he might win ſome*. And thus doing, we are like to our heavenly father, who doth good to all; but if we give our ſelves to wrong doing, we are evill ones, and herein like to the Devill himſelfe.

Wrong doing the properties of an evill man.

[p] Ig. 11. 6, 7.

[q] Act. 9. 21.

[r] 1 Cor. 9. 22.

Fourthly, Chriſt here forbidding private revenge, which is unlawful, doth hereby eſtabliſh that revenge, which is lawfull & juſt. Now *lawfull revenge* (to ſpeake ſomewhat hereof) *is the worke of a juſt and lawfull power, requiring evill for evill*. This juſt revenge is two-fold, *Divine*, and *Humane*. *Divine revenge* is the worke of Gods abſolute power, taking vengeance upon offenders: of the lawfulneſſe of this revenge in God, there is no queſtion; only this wee muſt remember, that God executes this vengeance dayly, in the manifold miſeries of this life, and likewiſe in the juſt condemnation of the impenitent after death. Indeed as a father he chaſtneneth his Church and children, for vengeance in Chriſt becomes nurturement; but as a ſevere Judge he plagues the wicked, powring vengeance on them, both temporall and eternall. *Humane revenge* is the ordinance of God, whereby men being thereunto called by God, doe execute vengeance in the name of God: and it is two-fold, extraordinarie, or ordinarie: *Extraordinarie*, when men are extraordinarily ſtirred up by the Spirit of God, to execute vengeance upon offenders, in the name of God. Thus [s] *Phineas ſlew Zimri and Cozbi*: and thus many of the Judges of Iſrael, eſpecially [t] *Ehud* and [u] *Sampſon*, tooke revenge upon the enemies of Gods people: thus *Elia the Prophet ſlew Baals priſts*, 1 King. 18. 40. and *deſtroyed the two Captaines and their ſoldiers, with fire from heaven*, 2 King. 1. 10, 12. thus [x] *Peter killed Ananias and Sapphira*: and *Paul ſtricke* [y] *Elymas with blindneſſe*. This kind of revenge is now rare, for we are not to looke for extraordinarie inſtincts: wee know Chriſt rebuked his [z] *Diſciples*, for ſeeking to execute this extraordinarie revenge upon

1. Divine.

2. Humane.

Extraordinarie.

[s] Num. 25. 7, 8, 9.

[t] Iudg. 3. 27.

[u] Iudg. 14. 19. and chap. 15. &c.

[x] Act. 5.

[y] Act. 13. 10.

[z] Luke. 9. 54, 55.

Matth. 5. vers. 39.

upon the Samaritans; and therefore when wee have a conceit hereof in our selves, wee may justly suspect what spirit it is that moveth us. *Ordinarie revenge* is that which men ordinarily put in execution, in the Church and Common-wealth, according to Gods will, being thereto called by God: and it is two-fold, Lesser, or Soveraigne. *Lesser revenge* is the inflicting of lawfull correction upon offenders, in word or deed, not reaching to the case of life and death: this kinde of revenge is committed to parents over their children, and masters over their servants, to Schoole-masters over their Schollers, and Tutors over their Pupils. *Soveraigne revenge* is that whereby the Magistrate may lawfully punish men according to their offences in bodie, goods, or life it selfe; this I call soveraigne, not simply, but because it is the highest that agreeth unto man, being of life and death. This revenge is executed partly in peace, and partly in war: In peace, by the confiscation of goods, by imprisonment, banishment, and (if the offence deserve it) by taking away of life, for the good of the State publike. In time of warre, when as (not for everie case) but for the just repelling or requiting of wrongs, warre is made against the enemies of the State. Now though it belong to the Magistrate only, to execute publike revenge, yet everie private man may have the benefit hereof, and may upon just causes use the Magistrates helpe for his revenge: as first, if his cause bee weightie wherein hee is wronged: 2. if it bee necessarie: and 3. if it be for his just defence, for the common good, and the punishment of the offender; and the Magistrate in these cases may lawfully, nay, he must put in execution revenge for private men: for without this, neither Church, nor Common-wealth, nor any Societie could stand.

Ordinarie.

Wherein one may help to the Magistrate for revenge.

Thus, we see what just revenge is: now considering it is the ordinance of God, this must admonish us to eschew all outward offences, that wee may so escape the just revenge of the Magistrate: and also to make conscience of all sinnes, that so wee may avoid the vengeance of God. And thus much of the generall rule.

Now because this generall rule might seeme to be hard, therefore Christ explaines the same in three particular examples, wherein he shewes how men are to behave themselves, when they are wronged. The first example is in these words, *Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheeke, turne to him the other also*: under which are comprehended all injuries done to mens bodies, not only by blowes and words, but also in the contempt of their persons, signified by striking on the right cheeke: for usually men strike with the right hand, which directly should light on the left cheeke, and if the right cheeke bee smitten, it is commonly with the backe of the hand, which is a blow with contempt: now, say a man is abused in his bodie, even by blowes of contempt, yet hee must not revenge himselfe, but *turne the other cheeke also*: which words must not simply bee understood, but by comparison thus; *Rather thew thou revenge thy selfe, and resist the evill one that hath stricken thee on the right cheeke, turne to him the other*: for this particular example comprehendeth in it the generall rule of not resisting evill by private revenge: and that it may not simply be taken may hereby appeare: first, because Christ should then command the sufferer to give further occasion of wrong doing to the evill man, which is not his meaning: againe, Christ himselfe who gave this Rule, did not so practise it, when he was smitten by the servant of the High Priest, Joh. 18. 22, 23.

2. Example of suffering wrong.

A

B

First, by this example Christ condemneth the common practice of challenging the field for personall wrongs, and of taking that challenge when it is given; as also the fighting the single combat: for Christ teacheth, that a man must take many wrongs, before he seeke to revenge himselfe by any such course. If it bee said, it is a disgrace to refuse a challenge; wee must know, that true grace and credit standeth in yeelding obedience unto God, and not in sinning against him for the saving of our reputation with men.

Vse. Challenging the field unlawfull.

C

Secondly, the common practice of *fighting* and *quarrelling*, is here condemned: many hold it unlawfull to give the first blow, but yet if another strike them they thinke they may strike againe: but this Christ here condemnes, and his owne example is against it: for when hee was smitten before the High Priest, hee [a] *smote not againe*: when *Paul* [b] was smitten, he only defended himselfe in word, but smote not againe. And Christ checketh *Peter* for taking the sword, to resist the Officers that apprehended him in the garden; indeed hee permitted his Disciples to weare weapons, yet not for revenge, but for their just defence only.

Fighting and quarrelling.

a Joh. 18. 22, 23.
b Act. 23. 3.

D

Thirdly, Christ here condemneth their opinion, that make it a matter of praise for a man, that he will not turne his face from a man. It is indeed the praise of the Magistrate to be courageous, and not to feare the face of man. But yet a private man, be he never so strong, ought to turne his face from the adversary, unlesse it be in the case of his necessarie defence: for a man must suffer double or treble wrong, rather than revenge himselfe. If any shall thinke this to be a great disgrace, still he must remember, that our chiefest honour consisteth in approving our selves unto God, by obeying his will, who here commandeth us rather to turne our backs and flie, than to resist in our owne revenge.

Quest. But what if a man be assaulted, either on the high way, or in his house, may hee not then resist, to save his life and his goods? *Ans.* In such a case, hee may doe two things: First, he may to the uttermost of his power, defend himselfe and his goods; for the Text speaketh not against defence, but against revenge. Secondly, if a man can see no way to escape, either by

What a man may doe, being unlawfully assaulted.

by flight, or calling for helpe of the Magistrate, then he is to stand so farre in his owne defence, that he is rather to kill than be killed: for in this case, God puts the sword into a private mans hand, and makes him a Magistrate, to execute revenge upon his adversarie: and thus might a man lawfully *kill a theefe in the night without the guilt of blood*, Exod. 22. 2.

Fourthly, hence observe, that no private man may lawfully kill a Prince, though he should tyrannically destroy both Church and common wealth; for this Rule must square the actions of private men, they must rather beare double and treble wrong, than by way of private revenge resist the evill one. The revenge of evill Magistrates must be referred to God, to whom it justly belongeth, as *David* did, 1 Sam. 26. 10. and Psal. 43. 1.

Private men ought not to resist Tyrants.

Quarrelling notes an evill person.

Lastly, in this first example of particular injurie, we may see one propertie of an evill man; namely, to be given to fighting, quarrelling, and contending: such an one may think himselfe a goodly fellow, but yet he that use his strength to ordinarie quarrelling, and wrong doing to others, is here made an evill one, by the sentence of our Saviour Christ: and therefore such as excell in strength, if they would be approved of Christ, must make conscience of quarrelling and fighting, and offer violence to no man.

A

B

v. 40 *And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloake also.*

Here Christ propounds the second example of wrong done unto men, wherein he forbids the party wronged to revenge himselfe: to wit, being injured in his goods, either privately, or under colour of law, for both these may here well be understood. By *coat* is properly meant *the inner garment*; and by *cloake* the outward: but here the words are not so strictly to be taken, but indifferently for any divers garments: for in *Luke* they are thus set downe, *And him that would take away thy cloake, forbid not to take thy coat also*. And Christs meaning is this; If one unjustly contend with thee, to take from thee one garment, let him have another also, whether coat or cloake, or such like thing. And yet this commandement is not simply, but comparatively to be understood; to wit, rather than a man should seeke private revenge, hee must not onely suffer the losse of one garment but of moe, and so of other temporall goods.

2. Example of suffering wrong.

C

Out of this example, we may learne these Instructions; First, that Christians must be quiet and patient, and not given to contend, whether it be privately, or openly by suit at the law. This contention *Paul* reproved in the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 3. 3. and chargeth the Philippians *that nothing be done among them by contention*, Philip. 2. 2. which is a notable rule: for though men be at difference, yet there ought to be no contentious either in word or deed, all things ought to be done in love, and so strife shall cease: that wrangling spirit is not of God, whereby men strive to put downe others in words: when a man hath spoken his minde, he ought to cease, for multiplying of words is against Christian civilitie, and every where condemned in the holy Scripture.

Contention is against Christian civilitie.

D

Secondly, here is condemned, not the lawfull, but the common use of lawing, whereby men for every trifle will trouble the Courts. This argues a contentious spirit, and a minde that is given to revenge, which beseemeth not Christians, as *Paul* sheweth, 1 Cor. 6. 1, 2, 5, 6. and yet it is the common practice in these our daies, from whence come such unchristian speeches as this, *I will be revenged on him, or else I will spend all that I have*. But the truth is, that rather than a man should goe thus to law, hee ought to suffer a double and treble losse.

2 Common use of lawing naught.

Thirdly, here Christ teacheth, that in all our dealings we must have a principall regard unto charitie, and rather seeke to maintaine this grace in our hearts, than our outward worldly goods.

3

Fourthly, we are here taught to preferre our owne peace and quietnesse, before our temporall goods; yet not simply, but in this respect, that hereby we may have fitter time with quietnesse to imploy our selves in the worship of God, and so edifie our selves in holinesse and pietie: this dutie concerneth them especially, which have much dealing in the world, and thereupon many occasions of anger and vexation: for such unruly passions make a man unfit for Gods service; it is the meeke and lowly heart that receives the blessing from the Lord, Matth. 11. 29.

4 How we ought preferre our peace.

Lastly, in this example is set downe unto us, *a second propertie of evill men*; namely, to bee given to wrong their brethren in their goods, either privately, or under colour of law: such a one was *Zacheus* before his calling, when hee gathered tribute and custome for the Roman Emperour, he used a *forged accusation*, for his owne gaine: and these our dayes abound with those that enrich themselves by pilling and polling of their brethren; but all such are unjust and evill persons, by the judgement of our Saviour Christ.

5 Wrong doing a note of an evill person.

* Luk. 19. 8.

verse 41 *And whosoever will compell thee to goe a mile, goe with him twaine.*

Here Christ propounds the third example of wrong doing, by Superiours towards their inferiours, wherein the partie wronged is likewise forbidden to make resistance by way of private revenge. For the understanding whereof, wee must know, that as in this our common wealth

3. Example.

we

Matth. 5. vers. 41.

we have *Post-masters*, so in other countries, especially in *Persia*, there were like officers, who by authoritie from their Kings or Emperours, might take mens cattell, nay, men themselves, and use them for travell and carriage, at their pleasure: and it is like, the Jewes had got this custome among them after their captivitie, as may in part appeare, by *them* [b] *compelling Simon of Cyrene to beare Christs crosse when they met him.* Now Christ speakes here of the abuse of this authoritie; saying, *That if a man compell thee wrongfully, under colour of the Magistrates authority, to goe with him one mile, goe with him twaine*: that is, rather than by resisting thou shouldest revenge thy selfe, goe with him two miles: whence he gives to all Inferiours a commandement, to beare patiently the wrongs that are done unto them by their Superiours, and rather to suffer a double wrong, than seeke to revenge their lives by private resistance.

[b] Mat. 27. 32.

A

Here then wee see a just ground of reproofe of inferiours for sundry practices of impatience towards their Superiours; as first, when a man is attached by an Officer, to make violent resistance. This practice swarveth from the Rule of Christ: for say thou art attached wrongfully, yet thou oughtest to acknowledge Gods ordinance in Magistracie, and to obey the same, without offering private revenge. Secondly, it often falls out, that Land-lords, and men of wealth, oppresse the poore, by inclosing of common lands, and such like; now hereupon the poorer sort use to raile against them, and to curse them: but this practice is also here forbidden by our Saviour Christ; for albeit the rich men sin grievously in oppressing the poore, yet the poore must suffer rather a double or treble wrong, than by cursing speeches seeke private revenge.

The Offices of inferiours wherein inferiours.

1

2

Againe, in this example we may see a third kinde of wicked men; to wit, all such as being superiours, doe wrong and violence to their inferiours; as cruell Magistrates, oppressing Land-lords, cavelling officers, usurers, and such like: these are here called *evillones* by our Saviour Christ: and therefore they must learne to shew mercy, and leave off wrong and violence, if they looke to escape to be judged as evill ones at the last day.

A note of evill superiours.

Thus we see the three particular examples of wrongs, wherein men may not revenge themselves privatly. Now from them all joyntly considered, we may note two points: First, that the calling of a Christian is a state of suffering: 1 Pet. 2. 20, 21. *If ye take it patiently when ye suffer wrong for well-doing, this is praise worthie: for ye are hereunto called*: and therefore, if we would declare our selves to be the true members of Christ, wee must shew forth patience in bearing wrongs, without seeking revenge. This was Christs lesson to his Disciples; for having told them of afflictions to come, he bids them to [c] *possesse their soules with patience*: so when the spirit of God sets downe the afflictions of the Church, he addes this as an *Item*, [d] *Here is the patience of the Saints*. We therefore must labour to repell all malice and rancour when we suffer unjustly, remembring this rule of Christ, that rather than wee offer private revenge, we must suffer the doubling and trebling of the wrong. It is true indeed, this is hard for flesh and bloud to doe: but if we be but flesh, that is, naturall men, why doe we professe our selves to be Christians? for *He that hath not the spirit of God, is none of his*, Rom. 8. 9. And if we be in the spirit, we must obey the motions thereof, and learne of Christ who was meeke and humble, and following him, we shall finde rest for our soules.

Christianitie a state of suffering.

[c] Luke. 21. 19.

[d] Revel. 13. 10.

B

Secondly, when Christ sets downe these three examples of suffering wrong, he applies himselfe to the present outward estate of the Jewes, which was this? For one man to suffer wrong of another in his bodie, and in his goods, and yet to rest contented, without releese or amends. Now the cause of this their miserable condition, was their servitude to the Roman Emperour, who a little before Christs comming, had removed the Scepter from Juda, and made Juda a Province tributarie unto Rome, so as they were ruled not by a Prince of their owne, but by a foreen enemies Deputies.

Forren regiment a grievous thing.

C

In this estate we may see the miserable condition of any people that are in bondage, to a forren enemie: their lives are every way miserable: for besides their personall bondage, they are constrained to suffer losses and wrongs, in goods, in their names, without all remedie or releese. The consideration hereof must teach us, First, to be heartily thankfull unto God for the happie outward peace, which with the Gospell of Gods grace we now enjoy under our Soveraigne, being free from subjection unto any forren power. Secondly, to pray earnestly unto the Lord, for the good estate, life, and health of our Prince, by whom under God, we enjoy such joy and prosperitie; as also for the continuance of Gods holy hand of protection to preserve the whole land against all forren power whatsoever. Thirdly, to repent unfainedly of all our sins, that so we turning unto God from them, he may continue unto us those happie dayes of peace, wherein we have freedome from subjection to forren tyranny: for our sins are our greatest foes, they lay open the ports of our lands, and the gates of our cities to the spoyling enemie; they will pull downe our strong walls, and take away the strength of our armed men: no enemies can doe us so much harme as our owne sinnes: and therefore we must humble our selves for them, and if we have not repented, now we must begin; and if wee have begun, wee must proceed and renew the same more and more. If wee had felt the misery of subjection to forren power, as these Jewes now did, it would touch us: and therefore before these evils come upon us, let us meet our God by true repentance, that so he

D

he may keepe from us this fierce wrath.

V. 42 *Give to him that asketh: and from him that would borrow of thee, turne not away.*

Doe good for evill.

Christ having forbidden private revenge, doth here command the requitall of good for evill, in two particular examples of well-doing, taken from giving and lending: by both which, though not expressely, yet in sense and meaning Christ would teach his hearers thus much; *Let the man bee what he will, doe thou good unto him for evill.*

A

For the first, *Give to him that asketh, &c.* These words must not be taken simply, but in this sense: *Give unto him that asketh on a just cause being poore, though he cannot requite thee againe*, nay, though he had done thee wrong, and were thine enemy. This exposition is plaine, Luk. 6. for having set downe his commandement for giving, v. 30. he renders this reason thereof in effect; *Because they cannot requite thee againe*, v. 33. which plainely imports that it must be to the poore.

Almes-giving a duties.

Here now first observe, the forme of Christs words, they are commanding, *Give to him, &c.* whence I gather that a man is bound in conscience upon the paine of death to give Almes and releese: Matth. 25. 41, 42. Christ adjudgeth some to hell for the neglect of this dutie: now there could be no such curse, if there were no commandement, that did bind their conscience to doe that, for want whereof they are condemned. Againe, in the sixth commandement, we are bound to doe all duties that may preserve our neighbours life, of which sort is giving releese unto the poore, without which they cannot live. If it be said, that [a] *Daniel* made Almes-deeds no commandement, but a matter of counsell unto *Nebuchadnezzar*: I answer, that things commanded may bee propounded by way of counsell: so doth Christ to the Church of Laodicea, [b] *I counsell thee to buy of me gold, &c.* Againe, *Daniel* used this forme of speech to the King, *Let my counsell be precious unto thee*: not because it was no commandement, but because he would so temper his speech, that it might better take place in the stout heart of this proud king. And when as *Paul* (2 Cor. 8. 8.) speaking of Almes saith, *he speaketh not by commandement*, it is to be understood not simply of Almes-giving, but of the measure thereof, as the former verse doth plainely shew.

[a] Dan. 4. 24.

[b] Rev. 3. 18.

Vse 1. We may not doe with our owne what we will.

Here then we see those men confuted which say, they may doe with their owne what they will: this is not so, for mens goods are not their owne simply, but Gods also: and they indeed are but the Lords stewards to dispose of them as he commands: now his will is, that part thereof should be given to them which want.

Secondly, we see here also that those men sin grievously who are so covetous, that they will give nothing to the poore: sell they will, and lend also, upon a good pawne, for their owne advantage: but by free gift they will part with nothing. These are miserable persons, who doe what they can to condemne themselves: for Gods commandement binds men in conscience to give unto the poore, and that freely. Yet here we must know, that not onely they who give freely doe a worke of mercie; but also they who lend and sell, when as their lending and selling will as much profit the poore as giving: this in effect is almes-deeds here also commanded: and therefore *Joseph* is commended, not onely for giving, but for selling corne to the Ægyptians and others in the time of dearth.

B

Thirdly, this being a commandement binding conscience, must stir us up to doe all good duties of releese with cheerfulnesse, that so meet and decent provision for the poore may not onely be begun, but also continued: for it is acceptable unto God.

A second point here to be observed is, what kinde of commandement this is: *Give to him that asketh.* Gods commandements be of two sorts, Affirmative and Negative; and in the Morall law the one is alwaies comprehended in the other: now this commandement is affirmative, which must be noted, because negative precepts lay a streighter bond upon the conscience than the affirmative: and therefore are the precepts of the Moral law for the most part propounded negatively: for the negative precept binds a man to obedience alwayes, and to all and every time: as when God saith, *Thou shalt not kill*, a man is never exempted from obedience hereunto: but an affirmative commandement, though it bind alwayes, yet not to all times, as this of Christ for giving almes, it bindes not all men, but only those who are inabled to give; nor yet the rich to all times, but then onely when just occasion of giving is offered: and the same may be said of every affirmative commandement, as of keeping an holy rest unto the Lord, it bindes a man for ever, but not at all times, onely for the seventh day, and such like.

Parcimonie condemned.

Lending and selling may be works of mercie.

Negative precepts more forcible than affirmative.

C

Yet further to lay open this commandement touching Almes, we will herein handle eight points: I. who is to give: II. what is to be given: III. to whom we must give: IV. in what order: V. how much: VI. in what place: VII. at what time: VIII. in what manner we must give.

D

Of Almes-giving eight points.

For the first: The person that is to give, is not every one, but such as God hath set apart for this dutie: for, Matthew 25. 42, 43. some are there made to receive, as the *hungry, thirsty, naked, sicke, &c.* and others are made fit to give *clothing, food, comfort*, and such like. And Saint *John* telleth us who is made fit to give, namely, [a] *He that hath the goods of this world*: not onely he that hath abundance, but even he that

1 Who must give.

[a] 1 Joh. 3. 17.

that hath but a smal portion of worldly goods: and therefore the theefe that stole for want, is *forbidden to steale, and commanded to labour,* [a] *that he may have to give to him that wanteth:* and the poore widow is commended of Christ, that [c] *of her penury gave to the treasury but two mites.* Now in a giver there must be two things: first, a right unto the goods he giveth: for a man may not give that which is not his owne: secondly, a present full proprietie in the things he giveth, (unlesse it be in the case of necessity:) and by this are children and servants excluded from giving, unlesse they have some things of their owne, or doe it by command.

[a] Eph. 4.28.
[c] Luk. 21.2,3.
Properties in a giver.

Quest. Whether may the wife give releefe unto the poore, without her husbands consent? An *ancient answer* is this, that many wives in giving are *Abigails* in regard of their husbands, who are like unto *Nabal*; and therefore may give: and yet some other ancient Divines adde this, that the wife cannot give, where all consent of her husband is wanting, because both shee and all her possessions belong unto him principally; yet here we are to know, that there is a double consent of the husband; *expressed in open words,* whereupon there is no question, but the wife may lawfully give: and *secret,* which is threefold; first, when the husband doth not dissent; secondly, when he gives consent generally, as when he allowes her to give, but names not any particular; thirdly, when the wife hath a probable conjecture and presumption, that if her husband did know, he would allow of her giving. And in these cases of secret consent, the wife may also give: but if shee have not his consent any of these waies, shee may not lawfully give, unlesse in these cases: 1. that shee hath something private of her owne, either by exception before, or by grant after marriage: 2. that her giving serves to preserve the life or good estate of her husband and family, as *Abigails* did when she gave to *David*: 3. that the necessitie of the receiver requires present releefe: for extreme necessity dispenseth with proprietie.

Of almes-giving by a wife.
August epist. 199.

II. Point. What is to be given? namely, *Almes.* Here two questions are to bee skanned: I. what is almes? II. whereof almes are to bee raised? For the first, *Almes is a free gift, tending to preserve the temporall life of our neighbour:* first, I call it a *gift*, understanding it largely, because forgiving to them that are not able to pay, is an almes deed. Secondly, I say *free,* to distinguish it from subsidies to Princes, and Tenths-giving for the stipend of the Minister, and such like. These are gifts, but no free gifts: for the people receive protection from the Magistrate for their subsidies, and instruction from the Minister for their Tenths. Thirdly, I say, the end of Almes is *to preserve temporall life;* to distinguish it from spirituall gifts, which concerne the soule: the Papists make all workes of mercie whether they concerne the bodie or soule, to be almes; but almes properly, are

1 What is to be given.
Almes described.
I
2
3

A gifts that tend to preserve this naturall temporall life.

II. Question. Whereof are almes to be raised? *Ans.* First, of our owne goods: for a man ought not to give that which is an other mans: and therefore those that owe more than they are worth, cannot give almes, but are rather fit to receive: for all that they have in right and conscience belongs to some others. Secondly, *our Almes must be our first fruits:* things wholesome and good, and such as are fit for the person releeved. They must not bee the refuse of our goods, which wee know not else what to doe with: Nehem. 8.10. *Part of the fat, and of the sweet must be sent to them, for whom none is provided.* Thirdly, Almes must be of *goods lawfully gotten:* for evill gotten goods must be restored, either to the owner (if he be knowne) or to some of his kindred, or to the Magistrate: which shewes, that the Usurer ought rather to restore, than to give almes of his gaine for usurie. Fourthly, our Almes must bee given of our owne, with *difference and discretion:* c very mans goods for the most part may be distinguished into foure degrees: first, some are necessary to preserve life, without which a man and his family cannot live: secondly, some are necessary to mans estate, as those goods by which a man putteth in practice the duties of his calling; such are bookes unto the Student, and tooles unto the trades man: a third sort are

B

Whereof must almes be raised.
I
2
Prov. 3.9.
5

C such as are requisite for the decencie of a mans estate, and such are those that make a man walke in his calling with comfort, ease, profit, and delight: the fourth sort of things are superfluous; that is, all that portion which a man may want, and yet have things necessary for this life, and estate, and for the decencie thereof: these two last degrees are in Scripture called abundance. And answerably, there are two degrees of poverty: the first, is *common want,* when a man can live without receiving Almes, but yet very hardly: the second, is *extreme want,* when a man without releefe cannot possibly maintaine life: now in common want we must give of our abundance; that is, both of our superfluity, as also of our riches that serve for decencie: Luke 3.11. *He which hath two coats, let him part with him that hath none:* now he that hath two coats, is not he that hath a coat and a cloake, for so had [g] *Paul,* and yet retained them both lawfully for his use: but Christs meaning is, that he which hath things necessarie, and besides something over, serving for decencie and superfluity, must give thereof to him that lacketh. And in extreme necessity, hee must give of those goods which pertaine necessarily to his life and estate: for our neighbours life must be preferred before our owne temporall goods, and outward estate: [h] *Paul* testifieth of the *Macedonians; that in the extreme necessity of the Saints, they gave to their power, yea, and beyond their power:* upon this ground the Christians in the primitive

4
Temporall goods distinguished.
I
2
3
4
2 Degrees of poverty.
g 2 Tim. 4.13.
h 2 Cor. 8.3.

1 Act. 4.34.

mitive Church, [i] *sold their possessions for the releeving of the poore brethren in extreme want:* rather diminishing their owne temporall estate, than suffering the poore to want that were in extreme necessity. This rule ought alwayes to be regarded and practised, especially in times of want: as for those that make advantage of a dearth, and enrich themselves by Gods judgement on the poore, they are most miserable and wretched people, quite voyd of every sparke of that gracious disposition which was in Christ, who being *rich,* even King of heaven and earth, [k] *made himselfe poore, that through his poverty, he might make others rich.* It is the wil of God, that we should beare one anothers burdens, and helpe to lift up the poore that are pressed downe with the judgement of God: which we shall do, when we give not onely of our abundance in common want, but even of our necessaries in the extreme want of the poore.

i 2 Cor. 8.9.

III. Point. To whom must we give? *Ans.* To the poore: this needs no proofe: yet in these poore two things are required: First, they must be truly poore: that is, such as are indeed either in common or extreme want: and of such Saint *John* saith, [l] *If any have this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, if hee shut up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him.* Secondly, they must be such as cannot help themselves: Levit. 25.35. *If thy brother be impoverished, and have a trembling hand, thou shalt releeve him:* the man of *a trembling hand,* is one that is not able to maintaine himselfe: of this sort are Orphans, widowes, the aged, sicke, blind, lame, maymed in service, and such like, all these must be releeved. But the case stands otherwise with that kind of poore, which we call *lusty beggers,* who are able to provide for themselves, if they would take paines: Saint *Pauls* rule belongs to them, [m] *If they will not worke, they must not eat:* that is, they must not be maintained on the Almes of the Church. *Quest.* 1. What must such lusty poore doe? *Ans.* They must be imployed in some lawfull calling, wherein they may labour to get their owne bread, and not eat the common food of those that are poore indeed. For the Church and Common-wealth are as a mans body, wherein every member hath his severall office, for the good of the whole body: and indeed every man should have not onely a generall calling of a Christian, but a particular calling also, wherein he must imploy himselfe for the common good: it is against the Word of God, and the light of Nature, that any should live having nothing to doe. *Adam* in his innocency was injoyned to worke in the garden; and our [n] *Saviour Christ* before his baptisme, lived under his father in a particular calling, till hee was thirty yeares old; whose examples we must follow. *Quest.* 2. What is our duty towards these lusty beggers? *Answ.* From [o] *Pauls* rule we may gather, that wee must not ordinarily and of custome releeve them: indeed

To whom we must give.
l 1 Joh. 3.17.
Of giving to lusty beggers.
m 2 Thess. 3.10.
n Luk. 2.51. with Mark 6.3.
o 2 Thess. 3.10.

A upon present necessity they are to be releeved, but yet with this advertisement, that they looke not for it again, but that they provide for themselves by labouring in some lawfull calling: for this common releeving at mens doores, makes so many idle vagabonds and rogues as there are.

IV. Point. In what order must we give our Almes for distinction of persons? *Ans.* Touching order in releeving, the holy Ghost hath laid downe three Rules: First, by S. *Paul,* [p] *He that provideth not for his owne, and namely for them of his houshold, is worse than an Infidell:* whence this order may be observed, that I. a man must give to them that bee of his owne houshold and family: II. to his owne bloud, kindred, and alliance: III. unto strangers. The second Rule is this, Gal. 6.10. *Doe good unto all, but specially to the houshold of faith:* first, *beleevers* must be releeved, and then all others, good or bad. The third Rule is given by *Moses,* Deut. 15.10. *We must first releeve our owne poore,* that is, such as live among us, *and then give unto strangers,* if our ability will afford, and their necessity doe require.

The order of giving alms.
I. Rule.
p 1 Tim. 5.8.
II. Rule.
III. Rule.

B

V. Point. How much must we give? Touching the measure of our Almes, there is no particular commandement in Scripture: but yet these generall Rules may thence bee gathered: First, that *a man is not bound to give all that he hath:* Prov. 5.15, 16. *Drinke the waters of thine owne cisterne, and flowing streames out of the middest of thine owne well: let thy fountaines disperse themselves abroad:* where under an allegory borrowed from waters, the holy Ghost directeth a man, for the disposing of his riches; namely, comfortably to enjoy his owne goods, and yet to bestow some part thereof on them that want: and Luk. 3.11. *Let him that hath two coats, give* (not both) *but one to him that wanteth:* where we see them justly rebuked, that in prodigality doe riotously lavish and spend all that they have: for if a man may not give all, much lesse may he spend all wilfully. *II. Rule.* 2 Cor. 8.12. *A man must not so give to others, that hee himselfe be grieved, and they be eased altogether. III. Rule.* Almes must be according to the givers ability, and withall answerable to the necessity of the poore, whether in food, rayment, or harbour: so *Paul* saith, speaking of common releefe, [q] *the ministration of this service supplieth the necessity of the Saints:* and S. *James* requires, that in releefe such things bee given [r] *as be needfull to the body:* and Deut. 15.8. *If thy brother be poore, thou shalt open thy hand unto him, and lend him sufficient for his need which he hath.*

Of the quantity of our Almes.
I Rule.
2 Rule.
3 Rule.
q 2 Cor. 9.12.
r 1 Tam. 2.16.

C

VI. Point. In what *place* must Almes be given? Touching the place we must know this; that it is a disorder not beseeming Gods Church, to give releefe to wandring beggers at our doores: this may appeare by these reasons. It is Gods commandement, [s] *that among his people there should be no such beggers:* If any man

The place of Almes-giving wherein it differeth from other duties.
Reasons.
I
s Deut. 15.4.

man aske, how the poore were then releeved? I answer, God tooke sufficient order for their provision: for first, the husbandman [a] *must not gather his grapes cleane, nor yet his corne-field, but leave the after-gathering and gleaning for the poore.* Secondly, besides the [b] *yearely Tenths for the Priests and Levites, every* [c] *three yeares tenths were to be gathered and kept for the poore, and for strangers.* Thirdly, every seventh yeare the land was to rest, and all that it brought for that yeare, with the fruit of vineyard and olives was for the poore, Exod. 23. 11. Againe, in the new Testament the *Apostles ordained*, that in every Church there should bee *Deacons*; that is, men of wisdome and discretion, who were to gather for the poore, and likewise to dispose of that which was given, according as every man had need: in which very order of provision for the poore, the Lord forbids all wandring begging. II. These wandring beggers, are the shame and reproach of the people where they are suffered: for it argueth want of care of good order in Governours, and want of mercy in the rich, that they gather all to themselves, without regard how the poore should live. III. In releeving these wandring beggers, there is this double want in the giver; he cannot tell what to give, nor how much: because he knowes not the state of the party that beggeth. Now in almes-deeds there ought to bee a double discretion: the giver ought to know both his owne ability, and also the necessity of the receivers. IV. Common releeving at mens dores makes many beggers, and maintaines a wicked generation: for these wandring beggers are for the most part flat Atheists, regarding nothing but their belly, separating themselves from all congregations: and from begging many fall to stealing; or else they take such pleasure therein that they will never leave it, no not for a yearely rent. This is knowne to be true by experience. All which things duly considered, must move the Magistrates and every other in their place, to see that better order be observed for the poore than doore-releeving to all that come. And sith good lawes are made in this behalfe, men ought in conscience to see the same observed and kept: neither can any man without sinne transgresse the same. Indeed, if good order were not provided for the poore, it were better to releeve them in their wandring course, than to suffer them to starve: so dealt Christ and his Disciples with the poore, when good order failed among the Jewes, they releeved them in the high wayes and streets.

VII. Point. At what time must Almes be given? *Ans.* Hereof the Scripture speaketh little, yet this may be gathered thence: First, that releefe must be given when present occasion requireth: therefore *Salomon* saith, [a] *Say not to thy neighbour, Goe and come again: to morrow, if thou now have it.* Secondly, that the Sabbath day is a fit time for the giving of releefe for the poore: for the [b] *Apostle commanded the Corinthians*, that each one should lay aside upon that day, according as God had prospered him the weeke before, that which hee would give for the poore: where by the way, it may be observed, that daily giving at mens doores was not allowed by the Apostles. Also touching Trades-men this may be added: from this, that the Apostle makes contribution for the poore *a Sabbath dayes worke*; that whereas they use to imploy part of the Lords day, both morning and evening in serving their customers for their owne private benefit, this cannot be warranted: only this they may doe; upon the Sabbath they should sell unto none, but to such as buy of necessity, and then they may not make a private gaine of their sale, but must turne that worke to a worke of mercy for the poore, either selling without gaine, if it be a poore body that buyes; or giving the gaine of that which they sell to the rich, for the releefe of the poore. This indeed will hardly be obtained at trades-mens hands, but yet they must know, that the whole Sabbath day is the Lords, wherein hee will be worshipped with delight, neither ought men to doe therein their owne workes, nor seeke their owne wills, nor speake their owne words, Isi. 58. 13.

VIII. Point. In what manner must Almes be given? *Answ.* Hereof mov e is to be spoken in the chapter following: yet from this text these things may be observed: First, that Almes-giving must bee free; the giver must neither looke for recompence at the hands of man, nor thinke to merit any thing thereby at the hands of God. That Popish conceit deprives a man of the true comfort of the spirit in this worke of mercy: none but Christ by his obedience could ever merit at Gods hands. Secondly, our hearts in giving must be touched with charity, and the bowels of compassion: we must give with cheerefulnesse for *without love, all that we give is nothing*, 1 Cor. 13. 7. and *the Lord loveth a cheerefull giver*, 2 Cor. 9. 7. now if we consider the poore as our owne flesh, and see Gods image in them, this will move us to pitty. Thirdly, in the person of the poore wee must consider Christ Jesus, and give unto them as we would give unto Christ. This will move us to give, and that cheerfully: for in the day of judgment Christ will make it knowne that he comes for releefe to the rich in the person of the poore: to the mercilesse he will say, [b] *In as much as ye did it not to them, ye did it not to me*: but to the mercifull thus, [c] *In as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Fourthly, our almes must be given as a pledge of our thankfulnesse unto God for the blessings we enjoy: for all we have, commeth from God, [d] *and of his hands it is, whatsoever we give*: now he professeth, that when men *doe good, and distribute to the poore, he is well pleased with such sacrifices.*

Having seene what this duty of Almes-giving

Matth. 5. vers. 42.

[a] Lev. 19. 9.

[b] 2 Sam. 18. 26.

[c] Deut. 14. 28, 29.

[a] Act. 6. 3.

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[b] 1 Cor. 16. 12.

A

B

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D

Time of almes-giving. Rules I.

[a] Prov. 3. 28.

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The manner of Almes-giving.

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[b] Mat. 25. 45.

[c] v. 40.

[d] 1 Chr. 29. 14.

[e] Heb. 13. 16.

1 Motives to Almes-giving.

[f] Jam. 1. 27.

[g] 2 Cor. 9. 6.

Propriety of goods lawfull.

[h] Act. 4. 32.

[i] Act. 5. 4.

ving is, and how it must be performed; we must now stirre up our selves to put the same in practice: and to move us hereunto, consider the reasons following: I. We all desire to be counted righteous; now if wee would be such indeed, we must *visit the fatherlesse and widowes*, we must *doe good, and give almes to the poore*: for *this is pure religion and undefiled before God*, as S. *Iames* [f] saith. To come to the Church and heare the Word, and to receive the Sacraments are good things; but without mercy to the poore they are not regarded, but hated of God, Isa. 1. 13, 14, 15. II. If a man should offer unto us a peece of ground to manure and till for our owne reaping, we would take it kindly and bestow both paines and seed upon it: behold, the poore are sent of God to the rich; as a peece of ground to bee tilled; and when they give to the poore, they sow upon the ground: now as *Paul* saith in this case, [g] *he that sowes as a man soweth, so shall he reape*: we therefore must sow liberally, that wee may also reape liberally. III. Prov. 19. 17. *He that hath mercy upon the poore, lendeth unto the Lord*: wee would easily be moved to lend, if we had an honest man to be surety unto us, for returning of our owne with advantage: well, the Lord offers himselfe to the rich to be surety for the poore; who then will feare to lend, having so good a debter? IIII. If these promises will not move us, let us consider the fearefull curses threatned against the mercilesse and hard hearted; for as *he that giveth to the poore shall not lacke, so he that hideth his eyes from them, shall have many curses*, Prov. 28. 27. *And hee that stoppeth his eares at the crying of the poore, he shall crie and not be heard*, Prov. 21. 18. and the woefull sentence of condemnation shall bee pronounced upon the wicked for the neglect of this duty, Mat. 25. 41, 42.

Further, from the words, *Give to him that asketh*, wee may learne, that it is the will of God, that among his people there should be *a propriety of goods*, and that all things should not be common in that behalfe: for the Lord would have some to have to give, and some to want that they might receive; which would not be, if all things should bee common both for use and propriety, as some have fondly imagined. If any man thinke it was so in the primitive Church, because it is said, [h] *they had all things common*, hee is to know, that that community was in such things onely, as men had then freely given for the common good. And yet even then, none was compelled or bound in conscience to give all his substance in that fort: for there *Peter* tells *Ananias, that his possession, while it remained unsold, appertained to him; and after it was sold, the price thereof was in his own power to dispose of as hee would. Object. 2.* All things belong to beleevers, as *Paul* saith, *All things are yours*, 1 Cor. 3. 21. and therefore they ought to be common. *Ans.* The Apostle meaneth that they had right in Christ to all things, and did enjoy them by hope; but yet the fruition of them in actuall propriety, is not had before the day of judgement.

Againe, if giving to the poore be a duty of every one, whom God inables hereunto, then no man may voluntarily dislable himselfe from it; whereupon the Popish practice of undergoing voluntary povertie falls to the ground, as unlawfull: for thereby they dissable themselves unto this duty. Indeed the Papists make this a *state of perfection*, but *David* judged begging to be a curse, Psal. 109. 10. else he would not have spoken of freedome from beggery as of ablesing, which he doth, Psal. 37. 25. *I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging.*

Lastly, in this commandement see the error of those men, that give themselves wholly to gather riches to themselves, being like to the moule which is alwayes digging in the earth: for God requires that a man should give as well as get, nay he must get to give, and not to keep: for God is more glorified by giving, than by keeping: and herein his children resemble their heavenly father, who receiveth nothing of any man, and yet *giveth liberally to every one that asketh, without reproaching any*, Jam. 1. 5.

And from him that would borrow of thee, turne not away. These words containe Christs second precept, touching requiting good for evil, taken from lending & borrowing. To know the meaning of this Rule three points are to be handled: I. what it is to lend: I I. to whom men must lend: I I I. in what manner. For the first, what lending is, is well knowne by common experience: it is a civill contract or bargaine, in which money, corne, or such like goods, passe from man to man, both in regard of use and title: yet so, as the borrower is bound in conscience to returne the thing lent unto him, or else that which in value is equall unto it.

II. Point. To whom men must lend. This circumstance is not here expressed by *Matthew*, but must be supplyed out of *Luke*, chap. 6. 34, 35. where Christ forbids them to lend, as *sinners doe, to receive the like again: but* (saith he) *love your enemies, and doe good, and lend looking for nothing again*: where it is plaine, that lending must be to such as are truly poore, and not able to lend again like for like. For the better understanding whereof wee are to know, that in humane Societies there bee three sorts of men: First, such poore as are unable to provide for themselves things necessary, by reason of some impotency, as sicknesse, age, lamenesse, or such like; and these are commonly called beggers. A second sort are those, which being poore have yet a trade, wherein they can provide for themselves some part of their maintenance, and yet by reason of their povertie, still want some things necessary, which of themselves they cannot procure. The third sort are rich men, such as have worldly goods in abundance, not onely sufficient for their necessaries, but much overplus: now to each of these belongs

Vsurd usurery not well.

Gains on Mar. 12. in the Hebrew, and Mon. Hist. 1. 6. 30.

Gaines goods received.

Of lending three points.

1 What lending is.

2 To whom we must lend.

Three sorts of men in poverty.

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longs his peculiar duty. To the first sort of poore that have the *stinking hand* (as *Moses* k speaketh) alms are due, and they must be releeved by giving freely, as wee have shewed in the former precept. To the second sort of poore, belongs lending properly, specially then, when their necessity requires. To the rich, neither gifc nor lone is due; but on the contrary they ought to give and lend to the poore, maintaining themselves by the honest labour and industry of their lawfull callings.

k Lev.25.35.

Manner of lending.

3. *Point.* In what manner must men lend? *Ans.* With a *willing minde*, without any shew of grudging, either in speech, or by turning away the head or body; as it is here said, *From him that would borrow of thee turne not away*: which property in the lender, is yet further expressed by *Luke*, saying, *Lend, looking for nothing again*: where Christ doth not simply forbid men to looke for that which they lent; but his meaning is, to shew with what affection and disposition of heart men ought to lend: namely, having respect onely to the good of the party borrowing, and not to the restitution of the thing lent: as when a poore man comes to borrow, wee must reason thus with our selves; This man is poore, and it may bee will not pay me againe; not thus, This man is painefull although he be poore, and is like to pay mee again, and therefore I will lend. This (saith Christ) *is the practice of sinners*, who lend, *because they looke to receive the like*. Bee thou therefore moved to lend upon a good desire to helpe the poore, and let not thy minde be running upon the losse, or false returne of the thing lent. Thus is that clause of Christ, *looking for nothing again*, to be understood, and not to be applyed to the gaine of usury, whereat Christ aimeth not in this place.

Fifth 2. lending is a duty.

First, here observe, that to lend unto the poore, is a commandement of God, binding the conscience of the rich; it is not left free to the rich mans choyce, whether he will lend or not, but if the poore mans case require, he sinnes against God if he doe not lend: for he breakes this commandement. *David* therefore makes it the property of a *good man, to be merciffull and to lend*: Psal.112.5. where we see that wrecched practice of many rich men condemned to the pit of hell, who are so farre from lending to the poore, that they hoard up their store till a time of dearth, that then they may inrich themselves by poore mens want: and thus they increase Gods judgement upon the poore, and as it were, l *grind their faces*, and m *tread upon them*, as the holy Ghost speaketh. But they shall one day finde, that they ought to have lent unto the poore, in their necessities; yea, and when the hand of God in common want lieth more heavy upon the poore, they ought then to open their hands more liberally towards them. It is an usuall and common practice, that when a man beginnes to decay in his estate, no man will lend him any thing; but because he beginnes to decay, therefore they withdraw their helpe, lest he should not pay them againe. But this ought not to be so: it is Christs commandement, that the rich by lending should sustaine such an one, as by reason of want is ready to fall into decay.

l Ezek.18.15.
m Amos 5.11.

2 Free lending.

Secondly, this commandement Christ binds the rich, not only to lend, but to lend freely without taking any increase: for they must lend, not looking for any againe: yea, Exod. 22.25. the Lord expressely forbids to take increase of the poore: where wee see the common practice of Usurers condemned to the bottome of hell, who lend unto the poore upon bonds for increase: these are they, that live on the blood and life of the poore, whose sin is every where condemned, and ought to be hated as bloudshed it selfe. But the rich will say, they are intreated so to doe, and are greatly thanked for so lending. *Ans.* This excuse will not serve the turne: for *Sauls* armour-bearer was a murtherer for killing his Master, though *Saul* earnestly besought him so to doe, 2Sam. 1. 9. 16.

3 Forgiving of due is lent.

Thirdly, here further learne, that a man must lend, and yet not alwayes take againe the principall: indeed he may require and receive his owne, else there should be no lending but all giving, which two are here distinct: but yet when the poore that borrowed, is fallen into further poverty, the rich must turne his lending into giving, and forgive the principall or part thereof, as their severall estates shall require. Deut. 20.10, 11, 12. A man may take a pledge for his debt of the poore, but yet if the pawne be a thing *necessary to the poore mans life, he must not take it, or at left not retaine it till the sunne setting*.

4 n Luke.6.35. Of receiving increase for lending.

Fourthly, some may here aske (seeing Christ *bids us lend looking for nothing again*n) whether may a man at no time with good conscience receive increase for his lending? *Ans.* Lending is two-fold: of due, or of courtesie: lending of due is the lone of the rich unto the poore, when his necessity compels him to borrow: and for this a man cannot with good conscience take any increase. Lending of courtesie is, when one rich friend lends unto another: this is not forbidden in the Word of God, but is left to a mans owne liberty and discretion, neither hath it any promise of reward. Now in this case of courtesie, I doe not finde in Scripture that all taking of increase is simply condemned: nay, in some cases, both the Law of Nature, and the Lawes of all countries doe allow it. As first, when the increase is given onely in way of thankfulnesse, as a blessing to require in kindnesse a good turne received: for ingratitude is abhorred of all; and the law of Nature requires to doe good for good: and all Divines both Protestants and Papists, doe allow this kinde of increase. Secondly, when a man sustaineth damnage by his lending, he may receive increase by way of satisfaction for his losse.

1 Cases wherein a man may receive increase for lending.

2

losse. Thirdly, when a man is contented to adventure his principall in the hand of him that borroweth it, then also may hee take increase; like as a man may receive hire for his horse, or for the use of any other goods, standing to their losse, Exod.22.14.

Duties of the poore.

1 Contentation.

Thus we see what the will of God is for giving and lending unto the poore: now hence the poore may receive instruction. First, hereby all may learne, that God will have some poore among his people, to receive and borrow of the rich: which may serve to perswade the poore to be contented with their meane estate, esteeming it to be the best for them, because God in his wisdome and providence hath ordained it. Secondly, the poore must take occasion from their outward povertie, to seeke to bee rich in God through grace; Jam. 2.5. *Hath not God chosen the poore of this world, that they should be rich in faith?* Herein they may match, and goe beyond the richer sort; which is a matter of great joy: Jam. 1. 9. *Let the brother of low degree, rejoyce in that he is exalted*: that is, with God, who counts them rich, Revel. 2. 9. Thirdly, hence the poore must learne to carrie themselves submissively towards the rich, of whom they receive great helpe and comfort by their giving and lending: Pro.18.23. *The poore* (saith *Salomon*) *uttereth supplications*: noting their humilitie, which reproves many poore, who are so proud hearted and ingratefull, that they will not afford the rich a good word: but this beseemeth none, much lesse those that are to live by the rich: Psal. 101. 5. *Him that hath a proud looke & high heart, I cannot suffer.*

2 Seeke to be rich in grace.

3 Humble.

v. 43 *Ye have heard that it hath beene said of old, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemie:*

In this verse and the rest to the end of this Chapter, our Saviour goeth about to purge the generall Commandement of the second Table, touching the *love of our neighbour*, from the corrupt interpretation of the Jewish Teachers, and to restore it to his true and proper meaning. And as in the former, so here, he first laies down their false doctrine touching this Commandement, v. 43. and then confutes the same, v. 44, 45, &c. In laying downe their false interpretation, he propounds the Law of *Moses* touching brotherly love, Levit. 19. 18. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour*, which must here be understood in their false sense, who by *neighbour*, meant a *friend*: as if God had said, thou shalt love thy friend. Then he adjoyneth their tradition gathered from the Law of God mis-conceived; namely, *to hate a mans enemie*.

In these Jewes we may observe two manifest abuses of Scripture, which ought not to bee in any Teachers: to wit, *mis-interpretation*, and a *false collection*. The word they misconstrue, is

A *Neighbour*, which in the old Testament is taken two wayes, either strictly and more properly for a familiar friend and acquaintance, in which sense it is commonly taken; or more generally, for any one that in any kinde of vicinitie is neere unto us, as by consanguinitie, habitation, office, traffique, or being only in the same place with us: for so is the *Samaritan* said to be neighbour to the man that fell among theeves, *because he found him lying in the way where he travelled, and had compassion on him*. Now the Jewish Teachers leave the generall signification of the word, which expressed the true meaning of the Holy Ghost, and take the speciall signification, and so restraine this Law of love to friends only. Whereby wee see how necessarie it is, that the Tongues wherein the Scriptures were penned should be well known and understood: for the mistaking of the signification of a word by the Jewish teachers, caused a manifest errour to be taught among them for truth. And this maketh greatly for the honour of the Schooles of learning, where the studies of the Tongues is professed. And herein also another thing may be noted in the Jewish Teachers, that in the time of Christ they were ignorant in their owne tongue, and therefore no marvell though at this day they know not the properties thereof, seeing their Commonwealth is decayed, and they dispersed among all people.

Neighbour is taken two wayes.

Luke.10.36.

B

Schooles of learning approved.

Their second fault is a false collection and consequent, that because a man must love his friend, therefore he must hate his enemie: this is against the rules of Art: for unlesse the contraries be equall, a consequent will not thence follow in this sort.

C

Here then observe the necessitie of the study of humane Arts, and among the rest, especially of the Art of Logicke, whereby wee may discerne betweene true and false collections. Again, here observe an infallible note of a false Teacher; to wit, to temper the word of God to mens naturall affections, and so to expound it as they may both stand together. The Jewes were a people that loved their friends intirely, and hated their enemies bitterly: now universally doe these Teachers expound this Law, whereby they overturne both the Law of God, and the salvation of the people. Thirdly, mark here the fruit of corrupt doctrine, namely, to corrupt good manners. The Jewes were a people that did much brag of their Ancestours and privileges, and in regard of themselves contemned all forren Nations; yea, they hated them, and therefore they were hot in contention with *Peter*, for going to *Cornelius* a Gentile; Acts 11.2. now this their malice proceeded partly from nature, and partly from the false doctrine of their Teachers, which was, that they might hate their enemies. The like may appeare in many practices of Popetie to this day: for when that Superstition was aloft, the people were taught a distin-

Use 1.

2 A note of a false teacher.

D

3 Corrupt doctrine corrupts good manners.

diſtinction of times and places, in regard of holineſſe, the fruit of which doctrine ſticks faſt in the hearts of many unto this day; for they thinke Churches and Chappels to be more holy than other places, and therefore ſome will not pray but when they come into ſome ſuch place. And doe they not make great difference of dates and times? all which are fruits of Poperie. In regard whereof, we ſee it is neceſſarie, that the puritie of Religion in faith and manners ſhould be ſtrongly maintained by the ſincere miniſterie of the Word: for many diſorders in mens lives, come from the unſound handling of the Scriptures. Whereby we may ſee Gods unſpeakable mercie and goodneſſe towards us, in vouchſafing us an holy Miniſterie, wherein the puritie of doctrine is, and hath beene long, and may bee ſtill through Gods mercie maintained and publiſhed. This ought to move us to all thankfulneſſe unto God, and to endevour to ſhew the fruit of this true Religion in all holineſſe and pietie, both of heart and life towards God and man.

v. 44 *But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies: bleſſe them that curſe you: doe good to them that hate you, and pray for them which hurt you, and perſecute you.*

Here our Saviour Chriſt propounds his Anſwer unto the former falſe doctrine of the Jewiſh Teachers, for the *hating of an enemie*. Wherein firſt hee layes downe a generall Rule, containing the ſumme of his whole anſwer, ſaying, *Love your enemies*: then hee expounds that Rule in the ſame verſe, and after proves it, v. 45, 46. Of theſe in order.

For the firſt, *Love your enemies*. In this Rule two things muſt be known: I. what is an enemie: II. what it is to love an enemie: both theſe are evident in the words following, wherein Chriſt expounds this Rule, *Bleſſe them that curſe you, &c. An enemie* then, is any one that of hatred doth wrong unto his neighbour, either in word, by curſing or evill ſpeaking; or deed, by ſtriking and perſecuting him. But what is it to love our enemie? *Love* properly is an affection of the heart, whereby one is well pleaſed with another. But here more generally, love comprehendeth theſe two things: firſt, to bee lovingly affected in heart towards an enemie; ſecondly, to uſe an enemie lovingly in ſpeech and action: ſo it is taken, 1 Joh. 3. 18. *Love not in word and tongue only, but in deed and truth.* And Rom. 10. 13. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* For the firſt, love in the heart comprehendeth all good affections that one man beareth to another: as mercie, compaſſion, meeknesſe, and deſire to doe unto them

An enemie deſcribed.

What it is to love an enemie.

A what good wee can; as it is more plainly expreſſed, Luk. 6. 36. *Be yee therefore merciſfull, as your heavenly father is merciſfull.* And for the ſecond, that kinde uſage which love expreſſeth in word and deed, is here ſet out unto us in three branches: Firſt, *bleſſe them that curſe you*: where is commanded all good ſpeech, both unto our enemie, and of our enemie. The ſecond, *Doe good to them that hate you*: where is preſcribed all loving uſage in action, by affording them helpe, releeſe, and comfort, any way we can. The third, *Pray for them that perſecute you*: that is, for their good eſtate in this life, ſo farre forth as it ſerveth for Gods glorie, and for their converſion and ſalvation in the world to come.

B See the evidence of theſe things in examples: For *the affection of the heart, take Chriſts example*, who ſo loved his enemies, that hee was contented to ſhed his owne hearts bloud for them, and to ſuffer the pangs of hell upon the croſſe for their ſalvation. For *love in courteous ſpeech, ſee Davids practice towards Saul his profeſſed enemie*: for though *David* had him in his hands, and might have killed him ſundrie times; nay, though he was provoked thereunto by his [a] *ſervants*, yet hee ſpared him, and with all termes of reverence towards *Saul* appeaſed his ſervants, calling *Saul his maſter*, and *the Lords anointed*. Thus lovingly alſo in ſpeech did *Paul* behave himſelfe to [b] *Feſtus* and *Agrippa*, though they were heathen men, and his enemies. For *doing good in action to an enemie, reade* Exod. 22. 4, 5. *If thou meet thine enemies Oxe or his Aſſe going aſtray, thou ſhalt bring him to him againe: and if thou ſeeſt thine enemies Aſſe lying under his burden, wilt thou ceaſe to helpe him? thou ſhalt helpe him up againe with it*: and Prov. 25. 21. *If thine enemie be hungrie, give him bread to eat: if he thirſt, give him drinke.* See the practice hereof in [c] *Eliſha*; when God delivered them into his hands, that ſought his life, he brought them to Samaria; and when the King of Iſrael would have ſlaine them, he forbade him: nay, he cauſed the King to refreſh them with bread and water, and ſo ſent them to their owne maſter. For *praying for our enemies*, we have the example of the Prophets, of [d] *our Saviour Chriſt*; and of [e] *Steven*, who prayed for thoſe that put him to death.

[a] 1 Sam. 24. 7. and chap. 26. 9, 10.

[b] Act. 26. 25. and 27.

[c] 2 King. 6. 14. 19. 21.

[d] Luk. 23. 34.

[e] Act. 7. 60.

D *Object.* 1. It will be ſaid, the Scripture elſewhere ſeemes to make againſt this; as Pſa. 139. 21, 22. *Doe not I hate them, O Lord,* (ſaith *David*) *that hate thee; and doe I not earneſtly contend with them, that riſe up againſt thee? I hate them with an unfained hatred*: whereby it ſeemeth, that in ſome caſes a man may hate his enemies. *Anſw.* Firſt, we muſt put a difference betweene our enemies cauſe, and his perſon; their evill cauſes and their ſinnes muſt bee hated, and we muſt give no approbation thereto: but yet their perſons being Gods creatures, and bearing his image in ſome ſort, muſt bee loved. Againe, enemies be of two ſorts; private

Of hatred towards enemies.

Two kinde of enemies.

vate, and publike: a private enemie is hee that hateth a man for ſome private cauſe in himſelfe, or concerning his affaires: and ſuch an one we muſt love, and not hate, as Chriſt here commandeth. A publike enemie, is he that hates a man for Gods cauſe, for Religion and the Goſpels ſake: and theſe publike enemies be of two ſorts, curable, and incurable: If our publike enemies be curable, we muſt pray for their converſion, hating their conditions: If they be incurable, and we have plaine ſignes of their finall impenitence, then we may hate them, for ſo we hate the Devill: So *Paul* ſaith, [f] *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus, Anathema Maranatha, let him be finally and wholly accurſed.* And yet this we muſt know, that we ought to direct our hatred to their ſinnes, and for their ſinnes hate their perſons, and no otherwiſe. Now *David* in that Pſalme, ſpeaketh not of private, but of publike enemies, who hated not only him, but God alſo in his religion, and were alſo incurable.

[f] 1 Cor. 16. 22.

Object. 2. But the practice of Gods children ſeemes to be otherwiſe: for *David* often curſeth his enemies, and prayeth for the deſtruction of them and theirs, Pſal. 109. 9, 10. and *Peter* wiſheth, that [g] *Simon Magus may periſh with his money*: and *Paul* prayeth the Lord, *to reward Alexander the copper-ſmith according to his doings*, 2 Tim. 4. 14. How can this ſtand with the Text? *Anſw.* There be divers interpretations of theſe facts: Some ſay (which is true) that in *Davids* Pſalmes, his curſes are in proper ſenſe, prophecies of the deſtruction of publike incurable enemies of Gods Church, and are only propounded in the forme of prayers. Againe, *David, Peter*, and *Paul*, were inlightned by Gods ſpirit, and ſaw into the finall eſtate of theſe their enemies whom they curſed, and therefore doe they wiſh for their confuſion, not for their owne cauſe, in way of private revenge, but upon a deſire of the furtherance of Gods glorie, in the execution of his juſtice upon them whom he had forſaken. And it is not unlawfull for Gods children, to pray that God in juſtice would glorifie his name in the juſt puniſhment of impenitent ſinners, that be cruell enemies to his Church.

[g] Act. 8. 19.

Object. 3. God gave Commandement to his people the Jewes, [h] *to deſtroy the Canaanites, and to root out their enemies out of the land*: now, how could they love them, whom they muſt ſo cruelly kill? *Anſw.* Wee muſt only love the Lord abſolutely, and others in God, and for God; that is, ſo farre forth as it ſtandeth with his pleaſure: and therefore when he commandeth to kill, we may lawfully kill. And this wee may doe by way of puniſhment appointed by God, not only without hatred, but in love, both forgiving the wrong which concernes us, and alſo praying for grace and mercie for the partie, if he belong to God.

[h] Deut. 7. 2.

Object. 4. There bee ſome that ſinne unto death, for whom wee are forbidden to pray,

A 1 Joh. 5. 16. and therefore we may not always pray for our enemies? *Anſw.* Chriſts commandement to pray for our enemies, admitteth this exception, *unleſſe they ſinne a ſinne unto death*; but that ſinne is hardly known of the Church of God: and therefore private men muſt not in a conceit thereof, ſuccaſe this dutie, to pray for their enemies. Thus then is this Text to be underſtood; *Love your enemies*, that is, your private enemies, *and doe good unto them*, unleſſe God command you otherwiſe, and *pray for them*, if they ſinne not that ſinne unto death.

Vſes.

1 Popiſh doctrine of hating our enemies.

Here is confuted the old received doctrine of the Church of Rome, touching the love of our enemies, as comming neere to the doctrine of theſe Phariſes: They teach that a man is bound always not to hate his enemies; but for loving them in good uſage outwardly, a man is not bound, ſave in two caſes: [a] Firſt, when our enemie is in *neceſſitie*, and danger of life, then he muſt be releeved and helped. Secondly, [b] in the caſe of ſcandall, when as by helping or releeving him wee give offence unto others: but out of theſe two caſes to ſhew kindneſſe to an enemie, is a matter of counſell and perfection. But this doctrine is damnable, ſtat againſt this Text, and the practice of Gods ſervants expreſſed in his Word; and therefore we muſt renounce it, and acknowledge that we are bound in conſcience, on everie occaſion, to ſhew our love in word and deed unto our private enemies.

[a] Aqu. 2. 2. q. 25. art. 8. 9. Bonav. in 3. ſent. d. 30. q. 2. & 5.

[b] Tuſter. inſtruct. 3. ſacer. l. 4. c. 10.

2 To wrong an enemie unlawfull.

Secondly, hereby is condemned the common practice of men in theſe dayes; which is, to wrong their private enemies any way they can, by word or deed: ſome will raile upon them, as [i] *Shemei* did on *David*, and as [k] *Rabſhekah* did on *Hezekias, and the people of God, yea, on God himſelfe.* This is a damnable practice, ſtat againſt this commandement of Chriſt, and his holy practice, 1 Pet. 2. 23. Nay, *Michael the Arch-angell durſt not blame the Devill with curſed ſpeaking, when he ſtrove againſt him*, Jude 9.

[i] 2 Sam. 16. 7.

[k] Iſa. 36. 4. 6. 12.

3 O'ld grudges unlawfull.

Thirdly, that fruit of rancour is here likewiſe reproved, whereby men will profeſſe they will never forget their enemies, though they doe forgive them. It is indeed agreeable to our corrupt nature, to keep a grudge long in minde, and to revive old wrongs: but this commandement of Chriſt condemneth this practice, and bindeth us both to forgive and forget: and therefore wee muſt labour to beat downe this ſpirit of revenge, and endevour to love our enemies in word and deed.

4 Hate to mans perſon.

Fourthly, here alſo ſee, that it is not lawfull to profeſſe enmitie to any mans perſon, for we ſhould love everie man. But how can we love him, to whom we profeſſe our ſelves enemies: Chriſtianitie and private enmitie cannot ſtand together: and therefore wee muſt labour to abandon out of our hearts, the hatred of any mans perſon, and ſtrive to ſhew forth loving uſage, even towards our enemies, though it bee againſt our nature, both by ſpeaking well

well of them unto others, and ſhewing kindneſſe unto them, both in word and deed; wee muſt pray for them, and goe ſo farre in all good duties towards them, that by our well-doing, [1] *we may heape coales of fire upon their heads*: that is, cauſe their conſcience like a fire to burne within them, accuſing them of their ill dealing towards us, and not ſuffering them to reſt, till they lay away their enmitie and malicioufneſſe againſt us.

[1] Rom. 12. 20.

Fifthly, this commandement of loving our enemies in word and deed, ſhewes it to be unlawfull for any man to utter evill ſpeeches of another, at any time, unleſſe the occaſion be juſt, and he be lawfully called thereunto: for love covers a multitude of ſinnes, but diſgracing ſpeeches are fruits of hatred. Though *Saul* were *Davids* profeſſed enemie, and ſought his bloud, yet *David* never reviled him; and wee ought to follow his good example.

v. 45 *That yee may bee the children of your father which is in heaven: for he maketh his ſunne to ariſe on the evill, and the good: and ſendeth raine upon the juſt and unjuſt.*

Because it is againſt mans nature to love his enemie, therefore our Saviour Chriſt inforceth his Diſciples hereunto, by the benefit they ſhall reape hereby, *in manifeſting themſelves to bee the children of God*: for he ſpake to thoſe that were Gods children, thus perſwading them to love their enemies: *That which will make you knowen to be Gods children, that you muſt doe; but by loving your enemies you ſhall make it manifeſt, that you are Gods children*: this he proveth in the words following, becauſe it is a propertie of God ſo to doe; *for hee maketh the ſunne to ariſe on the evill, and on the good, &c.*

Vſe. 1 A trie mote of Gods child.

Here firſt obſerve a trie note of the childe of God; namely, to imitate God his heavenly father, in loving his enemies, and expreſſing the ſame by all kinde uſage both in word and deed, praying for them, and releeving them in their neceſſities. And becauſe it is ſo bleſſed a thing to bee the childe of God, wee muſt therefore hereby ſtirre up our ſelves to the conſcionable performance of this duties.

2 The greatneſſe of a Chriſtian.

Secondly, from the ground of this reaſon wee are taught, that wee ought principally to imploy our ſelves to thoſe things, by the doing whereof, we may get aſſurance that we are the children of God; as alſo to ſhun the doing of all ſuch things, as declare us to be the children of Satan: that is, all ſinnes which are indeed workes of darkneſſe and of the Devill. In the evill day, whether it be of death, or of affliction, when no man can comfort us, this will be an only joy unto our hearts, which will ſwallow up all feare, that we know our ſelves to be Gods children: for then the Lord will acknowledge us for his owne: but if by ſinne we be like the Devill, God will refuſe us, and ſo we fall wholly to the Devill. Let us therefore practiſe thoſe things, whereby this ground of comfort may be treaſured in our hearts.

3 Whereto Gods glorious title ſerve.

Thirdly, note here the ſtyle and title of honour, which Chriſt giveth unto God; he calls him not only *their father*, but *their father which is in heaven*: this he doth, to ſtir up reverence in his hearers towards God, and ſo have Gods children done, Dan. 9. 4. before that holy Prophet powres out his prayer unto God for his people, he ſets out the Lord with moſt glorious titles; *O Lord God, great and terrible, which keepeſt covenant and mercie, &c.* And *Ieremie* praying unto God, ſpends three or foure verſes, in ſetting out Gods great power and Majeſtie, Chap. 32. 17, 18, 19. So *Hezekias* in his prayer for the people, calls the Lord, *the good God*; which no doubt he did, to ſtirre up reverence in his owne heart, and in the people, towards God. Whereby we are taught, when we have occaſion to mention the name of God, to doe it with all reverence, and to uſe ſome titles of honour therewithall, to ſtirre up our ſelves and our hearers, to a gracious awe of heart towards Gods Majeſtie. But lamentable is the practice of the world in this behalfe: for everie where the name of God is toſſed in mens mouths like a tennis-ball: ſome in the middeſt of their laughter uſe, *O God, O Lord*, for breathing words: but others ſpare not to make Gods glorious name the enſigne of their rage and furie, in bloudie and blaſphemous oaths: but void of grace are all ſuch.

For *he maketh the ſun to riſe on the evill, and on the good, and ſendeth raine on the juſt, and on the unjuſt.* Here Chriſt propounds the propertie of God in doing good, and ſhewing kindneſſe to his enemies, to prove that by ſo doing, wee ſhall ſhew our ſelves to bee his children. Wherein firſt obſerve, the manner of Chriſts ſpeech; he ſaith not, *He hath cauſed the ſonne to riſe*, and *hath ſent raine*, &c. but ſpeaking of the time preſent, *he doth now cauſe the ſunne to riſe, and ſendeth raine*: ſo likewiſe Joh. 5. 17. *My father yet worketh, and I worke together with him.* In which phraſe is expreſſed a notable worke of Gods heavenly providence; namely, that after the creation of all things, whereby God gave being unto the creatures, and power and vertue to doe the things for which they were created, he doth by his providence ſtill preſerve that being, and ſo in everie particular creature. It is God that gave being to the Sunne at the beginning, and it is he that ever ſince continueth the being of the Sunne, with the light and vertue thereof: and the ſame is true of all creatures, and of our ſelves: [a] *for in him we live, move, and have our being*:

Gods preſerving providence.

a Act. 17. 28.

being: hee is not like a Carpenter who builds an houſe, and then leaves it, but ſtill hee preſerves the things hee hath created. Herein hee may well be compared to a ſpring or fountaine, which cauſeth the rivers to flow while it ſendeth out waters, but when it is ſtopped, they are dried up: even ſo, whiles God continueth the being and uſe of creature, ſo long they are; but if he with-hold his hand from them, they ceaſe to be, and the uſe of them continueth no more. Thus it is with us, both in regard of our ſoules and bodies, with the faculties, powers, and graces thereof; but [b] *what haſt thou that thou haſt not received from him? who* [c] *beareth up all things by his mightie word.*

b 1 Cor. 4. 7.
c Heb. 1. 3.

Duties from Gods preſerving providence.

Now hence wee muſt learne theſe duties: Firſt, to ſeek to know him that is daily about us, and preſerveth us in ſoule and in body, from houre to houre. Secondly, to cleave unto God with our hearts, and to ſet our affections of love, feare, joy, and hope, wholly upon him, becauſe hee is the author and continuer of our being, what ever it bee. Thirdly, to obey our God in all things: for ſhall hee give being to our bodies and ſoules, and ſhall wee diſpoſe of them after our pleaſures, to offend him, who doth wholly ſupport us, and that continually?

The ſonne is the Lords.

Secondly, here note Chriſt ſaith, *his ſunne*, not *the ſunne*; teaching us, that the ſunne which ſhineth in the firmament, is Gods ſunne, not mens: God himſelfe is the ſole author and governour thereof, hee continueth that being which it hath, and the power and vertue which it ſheweth forth. And the ſame thing by proportion, muſt be underſtood of all other creatures both in heaven and earth, the moone and ſtarres, all beaſts and cattell, yea, and wee our ſelves are Gods creatures, and he is our Creator, our Lord, and Governour: Pſal. 50. 12. *The whole world is mine, and all that is therein.* Now hence wee muſt learne two things: Firſt, not to abuſe any creature to our luſt, as food, rayment, &c. but to uſe whatſoever we enjoy to Gods glorie, according to his will. Secondly, to endevour to bee led by the creatures which wee enjoy, to the knowledge of our Creator, for they are his: but alas, the practice of the world is otherwiſe, men ſuffer themſelves by the creatures to bee drawen from God; for ſome make their belly their God; to others, riches and pleaſures are their God.

Thirdly, Chriſts ſaying of the Father, *that he maketh his ſunne to ariſe on the evill and on the good*, doth ſhew us that common bountie which God vouchſafeth to his creatures, both good and bad: for the riſing and ſhining of the ſun, is an excellent worke of God, by which many other bleſſings are convayed to the creatures: For firſt, everie thing upon the earth receiveth heat and warmneſſe from it, *nothing is hid from the heat thereof*, Pſal. 19. 6. In which regard it may well be called, *the univerſall fire of the whole world.* Secondly, the ſunne ſerveth notably for the diſtinction of times, by day and night, weeke, moneths, quarters, and whole yeares, whereby wee know the terme of times from the beginning, and ſo may doe till the end of the world: in regard whereof it may well be called, *the clocke of the whole world.* Which things conſidered, may make us to bluſh and bee confounded in our ſelves, for that light regard wee have had of ſo excellent a creature, whereby God convayes ſo manifold bleſſings upon the earth! let us therefore learne to bleſſe God for the ſunne, and to expreſſe our thankfulneſſe by all good duties.

The benefits of the ſunne.

1

2

And ſendeth raine on the juſt and unjuſt. Here is noted the ſecond common bleſſing beſtowed of God upon the world; to wit, the falling of the raine upon the ground, both of good and bad. Now here firſt obſerve the forme of ſpeech uſed by Chriſt, ſaying, *Godſendeth*: ſee Deut. 11. 14. *The Lord giveth raine in due ſeaſon, the firſt and latter raine.* This worke is attributed to God, for weightie cauſes: Firſt, to ſhew that the ſame God, who ordained in the beginning, that the clouds ſhould water the earth, doth by his owne power uphold the continuance of the ſame bleſſing unto this day: and indeed, if hee ſhould not will the continuance hereof, it would for ever ceaſe to raine upon the earth. Secondly, to teach us that God diſpoſeth of the raine that falleth, reſtraining and inlarging it at his pleaſure, either for the bleſſing, or the puniſhment of the place whereon it falleth, and that many times without the helpe of the ſecond cauſes. Levit. 26. 3, 4. *If yee walke in mine ordinances, I will ſend you raine in due ſeaſon*: and verſe 19. *But if you will not obey me, I will make your heaven as iron, & your earth as braſſe.* Amos 4. 7. *I have withheld the raine from you, and cauſed it to raine upon one citie, and not upon another; one peece was rained upon, and that which was not rained upon, withered.*

Rains a common bleſſing of God.

Why God is ſaid to raine.

1

2

Vſe 1.

Here then we muſt learne firſt, that we ought to pray unto God for his raine of bleſſing; that is, for fruitfull ſeaſons; and alſo to be thankfull unto God for ſeaſonable weather when we receive it, becauſe he ſendeth it.

2. This muſt teach us to obey and ſerve God: for hee hath the clouds in his hands like a ſpunge, and when hee will hee preſſeth out the raine thereof: now, if wee obey him, hee will cauſe it to fall upon the earth for a bleſſing; but if we rebell againſt him, hee will either hold it backe, or powre it downe upon us for a curſe.

3

3. Seeing God ſendeth downe the raine, we may gather that no man can certainly tell, by the courſe of the heavens, the particular ſeaſon of the weather day by day. If the raine depended wholly upon the celeſtiall bodies, then ſhould it fall alike in all places, that be of like ſituation to the heavens; but that is not ſo, for God ordereth it according to the ſtate of the people, upon whom it falleth, either for a bleſſing, or a curſe, as we have heard.

3 Alſo Ingeſt predictions of raine uncertaine.

4. Hence we may gather, that neither witches

4

Weather cannot ſo much as raine.

[a] Iob 1. 16, 19.

5 Unſeaſonable raine Gods puniſhment.

[b] Pſal. 11. 6.

[c] Ier. 28. 13, 14, &c.

Gods friends and enemies.

A good and juſt man.

Matth. 5. verſ. 45.

Life 1. Chriſt teaches the way.

[d] Gen. 10. 6.

A man may be ſure in religion, and not be the true friend of God.

ches by the helpe of Satan, nor yet Satan himſelfe can cauſe raine, as many thinke; for it is God alwayes that raineth. The Devill indeed is the prince of the aire, and by Gods permiſſion he may joyne himſelfe unto a ſtorme, and make it more terrible and hurtfull; as hee did in the deſtruction of [a] *Iobs cattell and children, by fire from heaven, and by a mightie wind*: but yet he cannot make the matter of wind, or of raine; that is proper to God.

5. Doth God raine upon the earth? then we may well conſider, why the land is ſo often plagued with unſeaſonable raine: it is no doubt for our diſobedience, as we have heard, Levit. 26. 19. and the contempt of the word, among other ſinnes, is one maine cauſe of this judgement. Now if we would either remove, or prevent this plague at any time, wee muſt turne unto the Lord, and repent of our ſinnes, for thereto we are called by this judgement, Amos 4. 7. And if we doe turne, then will the Lord ſend a gracious raine upon our Land; but if we will not turne, wee ſhall have another raine, the raine of Sodome and Gomorrha; for [b] *upon the wicked God will raine ſnares, fire, and brimſtone.* And this is certaine, where God ſends his judgements for the contempt of his word, and yet men doe not repent, there [c] *one judgement is but the fore-runner of a greater, till they bee conſumed.* And this experience teacheth, that after inundations of waters, uſually comes plague and peſtilence: for the preventing of theſe judgements, let us repent.

The laſt point to be here obſerved is this: in what termes our Saviour Chriſt expreſſeth, who be the friends of God, and who be his enemies. His friends, he calleth *good and juſt*; his enemies, *evill and unjuſt.* Now that wee may diſcerne of our eſtate towards Gods in that behalfe, we muſt ſee what *a good and juſt man is.*

In everie ſuch an one two things are required: Firſt, true faith, whereby a man layes hold on Chriſt for his righteouſneſſe, ſanctification, and redemption; and for the obtaining hereof, hee muſt deny himſelfe, and become nothing in himſelfe, that he may be all in Chriſt. Secondly, true conversion of the whole man unto God, from all ſinne, ſo as his heart muſt be reuled and diſpoſed to pleaſe God in all things. And becauſe theſe things are inward and ſecret, therefore to make them knowen, there is further required, that a man carrie in his heart a reſolute and conſtant purpoſe, from time to time, never to ſinne againſt God: and this purpoſe of heart hee muſt teſtifie by a godly and conſcionable endevour of life, to pleaſe God in all things: for this is the fruit of true faith, and of ſound inward conversion: and in regard hereof, were *Enoch, Iob, David, Zacharie,* and *Elizabeth* called juſt. But hee that wants this conſtant purpoſe, and a daily endevour, from a beleeving and penitent heart to pleaſe God in all things, is a wicked perſon, and as yet Gods enemie.

By this, firſt, we ſee how many are deceived everie where, with civill honeſtie: for if a man live upright ly among his neighbours, and doe abſtaine from murther, adulterie, oppreſſion, and ſuch like ſinnes, hee is preſently counted a good man: ſuch an one indeed may be counted an honeſt man civilly, as [d] *Abimelech* was, but yet this outward honeſtie makes not a man juſt and good in the ſight of God, ſo as hee reputes him for his friend; thereto are requited true faith and true repentance, teſtified by new obedience.

Secondly, here alſo ſee, that neither the knowledge of Gods word, nor the hearing of it with ſome gladnes, and bringing forth ſome fruits, nor yet to bee able to conceive a prayer for the ſinne thereof; that none of theſe, (I ſay) no nor all of theſe, doe make a man the friend of God indeed, for all theſe may bee in an evill man, who hath a purpoſe in his heart to live in ſome ſin, in whoſe heart as yet there is no true faith, nor ſound repentance: without which (as we heard) no man is juſt in the ſight of God, nor accounted for his friend. And therefore wee muſt not content our ſelves with theſe things, but labour to be good and juſt indeed. When affliction ſhall befall us, or death approach, wee would give all the world, if it were in our hands, for good aſſurance that God were our friend: now then let us labour for true faith and repentance, and teſtifie theſe by a conſtant purpoſe, and a godly endevour to pleaſe God in all things, thorow the whole courſe of our lives; and then will the Lord eſteeme us for his friends.

v. 46 *For if you love them that love you, what reward ſhall yee have? doe not the Publicans even the ſame?*

In theſe words our Saviour Chriſt propounds a ſecond reaſon to perſwade his Diſciples and hearers to love their enemies; and to the end it might take the deeper root in their hearts, hee repeats the ſame againe in the next verſe, which in effect is the ſame with this. The words are plaine, if we know what Publicans were: *Publicans* therefore were Officers that gathered toll, and tribute, taxes, and rents of the Jewes, for the Roman Emperour, to whom the Jewes were in ſubjection. Now in the gathering of it they uſed much injuſtice and oppreſſion: for which cauſe they were hated of the Jewes, above all other people, and eſteemed moſt baſely of. Now (ſaith Chriſt) though theſe Publicans be void of all good conſcience, yet *they will love their friends, of whom they are loved.* And hence Chriſt reaſons thus; *If you my hearers doe but love them that love you, yee doe but as theſe Publicans doe: but you muſt doe more than ſuch ungodly perſons doe: and therefore you muſt love your verie enemies.*

A ſecond reaſon to love our enemies.

Publicans.

Here

Here firſt obſerve, that Chriſt doth not forbid one friend to love another, for then hee ſhould bee contrarie to himſelfe; but here hee condemnes carnall love, whereby one man loves another, only becauſe he is loved againe, which in effect is nothing elſe, but for a man to love himſelfe in another. And here to note the true manner of loving our neighbour, this Rule muſt be remembred, that *all the Commandements of the ſecond Table muſt bee practiſed in and with the firſt Commandement, touching the love of God:* Thus father and mother muſt be honoured, in God, and for God; and thus one man muſt love another in God, yea, though he be his enemie, becauſe he is Gods creature, and beares his image, as well as he himſelfe doth: yea, he is by God commended to our love. This muſt be the ground, though for other reſpects our love may increaſe towards our brother.

Rule of loving our neighbour.

What reward ſhall ye have? Here Chriſt would teach us ſingular wiſdome for the ordering of our lives; namely, that we give our ſelves eſpecially to the doing of ſuch things, as with God have promiſe of reward: what moved *Moſes* to refuſe to bee called the ſonne of *Pharaohs* daughter, to forſake the pleaſures and riches of Ægypt, and to chuſe to ſuffer affliction with Gods people? the word of God is plaine, [f] *he had reſpect to the recompence of reward.* But this doctrine is not regarded, elſe how ſhould all places abound ſo much with idle perſons, and ſuch as give themſelves wholly to gaming and company keeping, to ſports and delight: now what reward can theſe looke for at Gods hands, unleſſe it be the wages of ſinne, which is eternall death? Let us therefore beware of ſuch a courſe, and learne to abound in good works, which are things good and profitable.

What things we muſt ſpecially addict our lives unto.

[f] Heb. 11. 25, 26.

Chriſtians muſt abound in love.

Doe not the Publicans even the ſame? Our Saviour Chriſts intent in this inſtance, is to ſhew that his Diſciples, and for all profeſſours of the Goſpell, muſt goe beyond all other people in duties of love: indeed their whole life ſhould be ſpent in the practice of this vertue, Eph. 5. 2. *Walke*, that is, lead the courſe of your life *in love*; and the ſtate of the Church is, *to dwell in love*, 1 Joh. 4. 16. The reaſon is great, for Chriſtians of all other, receive the greateſt meaſure of love from God, through Jeſus Chriſt, and therefore they muſt abound in this grace; firſt towards God, and then one towards another: this is the badge of a Chriſtian, and the grace of our religion, and therefore let us ſhew it forth.

v. 47 *And if yee bee friendly to your brethren only, what ſingular thing doe yee? doe not even the Publicans likewiſe?*

Chriſts drift in theſe words, is further to inforce the duties of love, to the ſame effect with the former verſe. The word translated *bee friendly*, betokens the friendſhip which was ſhewed in that country in ſalutations, by embracing: now ſaith Chriſt, the verie Publicans will kindly embrace their friends, therefore you muſt doe more.

Embracings.

We obſerved before three branches of kinde vſage to be ſhewed towards an enemie; to wit, to ſpeake well of him, to pray for him, and to doe him good: now here wee may annex a fourth, even friendly ſalutation. This Chriſt injoyned to his Diſciples, when he ſent them to preach: *when yee come into an houſe ſalute the ſame*, Mat. 10. 12. although it may be afterward they ſhaked it, becauſe it was unworthy. And here we muſt learne to be kinde and courteous in ſalutation to our profeſſed enemie.

Kinde vſage of an enemie.

Friendlie ſalutation.

Object. 1. This is to countenance them in their ſinne and wrongdoing unto? *Anſ.* In ſalutation an enemie, we muſt put a difference betweene his perſon and his ſinne; wee muſt ſhew kindneſſe to his perſon, but not countenance his ſinne: nay, when we embrace his perſon, if occaſion be offered, we muſt diſgrace his ſinne.

Object. 2. 2 Joh. 10. *If any man bring not this doctrine, bid him not God ſpeed. Anſ.* John there ſpeakes of ſuch perſons as are enemies to God, to his truth, and to his Church; and ſuch indeed wee muſt not embrace: 2 King. 3. 14. *Elijha ſaith to Iehoram the idolatrous king of Iſrael, that hee would not have looked upon him, nor ſeene him, had it not beene for reverence of Iehoſaphat the good king of Iudah then preſent.* But private enemies, of whom Chriſt here ſpeaketh, muſt alwayes be kindly uſed in ſalutation. And yet there is a caſe, wherein this kinde ſalutation may be denied to one that is not a publike enemie: to wit, when a ſuperiour omitteth it as a part of chaſtisement and correction upon the inferiour. Thus *David* denied liberte to *Abſalom* to come in his ſight for a time, after hee had pardoned him for killing *Amnon*, 2 Sam. 14. 24. but among equals and private men this muſt be practiſed, yea, we muſt ſalute kindly, though they ſalute us not againe.

v. 48 *Be ye therefore perfect, as your father which is in heaven is perfect.*

Here Chriſt inferes an excellent conſequent from the former reaſons, wherein hee exhorts his Diſciples to perfection in all the duties of love. In it obſerve two parts: a commandement *to bee perfect*; and a patterne thereof in God. For the firſt, why doth God command that which no man can performe, for who can be perfect? *Anſ.* God gives this and ſuch like commandements for divers cauſes: Firſt, in regard of his elect, for to them Gods commandements ſerve as meanes of obedience, God by his grace inabling them to doe that which by

Why God commanded men to bee perfect.

command

Matth. 5. vers. 48.

command hee requires: for as in the creation Gods commandement gave being to the creatures, so is it after a sort in the regeneration, as here, *be yee perfect*, is a meanes to make Gods children perfect. Secondly, in regard of the wicked, as well to restraine corruption in them, for the peace of his Church, as also to leave them without excuse, seeing the best workes they doe are short of that which they are bound to performe.

Of perfection.

To come to the vertue commanded, which is *perfection in duties of love*. Perfection in generall, is twofold: of the Law, and of the Gospell. Perfection of the Law is, when a man loves God and his neighbour, according to the rigour of the Law. This is in no man in this life, but this shall be in Gods elect in the life to come. Perfection of the Gospell, is that endevour of obedience which God accepts in Christ, at the hands of his children. This distinction the Apostle maketh, Philip. 3. for first hee saith, *he hath not attained to perfection*, v. 12. meaning the perfection of the Law: and yet after hee speaketh of himselfe and others, as being perfect, v. 15. *Let us* (saith he) *as many as bee perfect, be thus minded*; that is, as many as be perfect according to the Gospell. Thus were *Noah, Abraham, Iob, Zacharie* and *Elizabeth* perfect, that is, sincere and upright before God, both in heart and life: and this is that perfection which Christ here requireth.

Generall.

Evangelicall.

Further, this Evangelicall perfection hath two parts; either of mans nature, or of his actions. The perfection of mans nature is by regeneration: for as in original sinne, is both guilt of *Adams* sinne imputed, and corruption inherent, which is the seed of all sinne: so in regeneration, which is the renuing of mans corrupt nature, there is an abolishing of corruption, and a refining of grace in everie part and faculte of the soule: for looke how far corruption spread it self by *Adams* sinne, so farre doth grace extend by regeneration. Of this perfection there be three branches; First, an *upright judgement in the minde*, whereby a man understands and believes not only the grounds of religion, but everie other doctrine truly grounded in the Word, and is ready to receive it, as it is further revealed; this is sincerite in judgement: whereby it is plaine, that to hold only the grounds of religion, and for other points, to follow the time, is a great imperfection and want of sincerite. Secondly, *a pure and honest heart*, whereby a man is free from any purpose to live in sin; and on the contrarie is inclined to everie thing that is good. Thirdly, a good conscience, giving testimony according to the Word, and so excusing, that a man may say with *Paul*, [a] *I know nothing by my selfe*: meaning, for which he should condemne himselfe. And looke where nature is renued, there these three are never wanting.

Parts of Evangelicall perfection.

1

Three branches of Evangelicall perfection in mans nature.

1

2

3

a 1 Cor. 4. 4.

2 Perfection of mans actions.

Perfection of mans actions is standeth in two things; First, in bewailing his wants and imperfections, known and secret: for it is a degree of perfection, to bewaile our imperfection. Secondly, in setting himselfe from a sincere heart, to obey God in all his Commandements, as occasion is offered: Psal. 119. 6. *I shall not be confounded, when I have respect to all thy Commandements*: and this indeed is the perfection of a Christian: halfe obedience is nothing: for as [b] *Iames* saith, he that failes in one Commandement of purpose and custome, is guiltie of all, because if occasion were offered, hee would breake all the rest.

A

B

C

D

b Iam. 2. 10.

But it will bee said, a man may have both these, and yet want much of perfection. *Answ.* A thing is said to be perfect two waies; either *in parte*, when it hath all the parts of perfection, though in weake measure; or *in degrees*, when it hath a full measure of perfection in everie part. A childe new borne is a perfect man in regard of his parts, having all the parts and members of a man; but it is not perfect in degree, till everie part grow up to his perfection. Now the childe of God when he is regenerate, hath all parts of perfection, both in soule and bodie, though in weake measure; but in this life, hee is not perfect in degrees, which is that full measure the Law requireth. 2 Chron. 15. 17. *The hearts of Asa is said to bee perfect towards God all his dayes*: and yet the high places were not taken away; yea, he failed in seeking to the Physitian, and not unto God, chap. 10. 12. *Asa* then had perfection of parts, but to perfection of degrees hee attained not in this life: and therefore he failed in these particulars, through the weaknesse of sanctification, which here is not finished till death.

Perfection in parts. Perfection in degrees.

So then it is plaine, there is a perfection in the childe of God, though joyned with much weaknesse, even in this life, his nature is perfect, being renued in soule to sound judgement, to an honest heart and a good conscience: his actions are perfect in Gods acceptance through Christ, whiles hee bewailes his imperfection, and endevours sincerely to please God in all things. This is that which Christ injoynes to his Disciples: this wee must labour for, if wee will resemble our heavenly Father: we can get no higher in this life; but let us attaine to this, and in the life to come wee shall bee perfect in degrees, for then our regeneration shall bee accomplished.

But herein men faile and come short of their dutie; as first, all those that spend their strength and wit to get the things of this world: these men little thinke of this perfection which the Lord requires in his children: it may be they will heare the Word, but yet their hearts are so glued to the earth and earthly things, that they favour not of regeneration, they know not what it meanes: but if they will be Gods children, they must follow *Iehosaphat*, 2 Chr. 17. 6. who *lift up his heart to the wayes of the Lord*: for that is the meanes to come to perfection.

Y

Who faile in seeking perfection.

Secondly, those also are reproved, that con-

tent themselves with a small measure of knowledge, and doe not strive after perfection, as Christ requireth: how can they have a sound judgement, which study not to know the doctrine of the Scripture.

A

3 The generall want of Christian perfection.

Thirdly, that generall want of Christian perfection is here reproved, when men content themselves, to yeeld to the outward duties of the first Table, that concerne Gods worship, and yet neglect the duties of the second Table, that concerne their brethren in generall, and pertaine to their functions and callings in particular. This is a common fault in Magistrates, Ministers, Parents, Masters, Servants, &c. they will be Christians in the Church, but they neglect to shew the power thereof in their callings, but this is a grievous want of sincerity, which makes them farre unlike their heavenly father: for he is ever like himselfe, and therefore looke what men professe in Gods worship, that must they practise in their callings. A Magistrate must bee a Christian upon the Bench, as well as in the Church; in the administration of Justice, as well as in the Congregation: and so must Ministers, Masters, and all estates. God allowes not of that service in the Church, that serve their wicked lusts at home, Jer. 7. 9, 10. Gods Sacrifices under the Law must bee whole and sound, not halt and lame, or maimed; and such should our obedience be under the Gospel, with sincere respect to all Gods Commandements. It profited *Herod* little to heare *John* gladly, and to doe many things, so long as he kept his brothers wife; nor *Iudas* to follow Christ, while his heart was upon the bag. Let our practise of religion therefore, shew forth the truth of our publike profession, and so shall we in some sort resemble our heavenly Father.

B

CHAP. 6.

v. 1 *Take heed that you give not your Almes before men, to bee seene of them, or else yee shall have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.*

C

IN the former chapter, the Evangelist hath faithfully recorded three parts of our Saviour Christs Sermon, and here he beginneth the fourth, which reacheth to the 19. verse of this chapter: wherein our Saviour Christ goeth about to reforme his hearers of all abuses in doing good workes, and he instanceth in these three; *Almes-deeds, Prayer*, and *Fasting*: not so much commanding them, as giving direction for the right manner of performing them, so as they may be acceptable unto God. From the first verse to the fifth, he intreateth of Almes-deeds, propounding two severall commandements, touching the manner of giving Almes. The first is in this 1. verse, *Take heed that you give not your Almes before men, to be seene of them*: which he inforceth by an effectuall reason in the words following, *or else ye shall have no reward of your Father which is in heaven*. And then exemplifieth it by a particular example of a corrupt manner of giving Almes, borrowed from the ambitious practise of the Scribes and Pharisies, vers. 2. The second commandement touching Almes-giving, is in the 3. verse, whereof hee renders a reason in the 4. verse.

2. Part of Christs Sermon.

Of Almes-deeds.

D

For the first Commandement, *Take heed, &c.* This may seeme to bee repugnant to that precept given before, Chapter 1. 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes*. But here is no contrariety, if wee marke well: for in the former Chapter wee are commanded to doe good workes before men, that they may see them, and glorifie God for the same. Now here wee are not forbidden simply to doe good workes before men, but to doe them before men for this end, *to have our praise of men*, that wee might bee glorified for doing them, howsoever it went with God.

Before wee come to the Rule, the words are somewhat to be scanned: for whereas we read them thus, *Give not your Almes before men, &c.* Some ancient Churches, after other copies and translations read them thus, *Doe not your righteousnesse or justice before men*: which must not seem strange that in Gods book there should be diverse readings: for in former ages, before Printing was invented, the Scriptures of God were conveyed from hand to hand, by meanes of writing: now they that writ out the copies of Scripture, did now and then mistake some words and letters by negligence, or ignorance, and put one thing for another, whereupon doe come these diverse readings: yet wee must not think that the word of God is hereby mained or made imperfect: for the true sense of the holy Ghost remaines sound and perfect, though it may bee wee cannot discerne of the

A diverse reading.

right reading. And the sense of Scripture is rather to be judged the word of God, than the words and letters thereof. Now it being here uncertaine, whether reading to follow, (for either of them concerne a stuffe convenient to the place) therefore I will exclude neither, but from them both propound this instruction.

Almes giving is Iustice.

That the giving of Almes is Iustice, and a part of mans tenoursiffe which God requires at our hands. This the Apostle sheweth plainly out of the 2 Psalmes, 2 Cor. 9.9. *He hath distributed and given to the poore his right tenoursiffe remaineth for ever.* And in common reason it must be so, for a man is but a steward over the goods he possesseth; the poore with whom he liveth, hath title to part thereof, and he must give unto them by *Gods expresse commandement*: so as unlesse hee give in some sort, hee playes the theefe, and robs the poore, by keeping backe that which is their due.

Psal. 112. 9.

Exodus 20.

In regard whereof wee must learne: first, to acknowledge that providing of maintenance for the poore, is not a worke of freedome or liberty, left to mens choice, whether they will doe it or no, but a matter of justice; and the not doing of it is injustice, against the law of God and of Nature, which require that the poore should bee maintained at home without begging abroad. Secondly, this should move us, to lay aside some portion of our goods to give unto the poore, for the poore have interest unto them and for this cause we ought to cut off our superfluities in living, in attire, in sports and pleasures, that so wee may bee better inabled to doe justice in giving unto the poore: for hereby commonly men are disabled to doe this part of justice. Thirdly, this should teach us according to our places, to see those good orders well maintained and set forward, which are provided for the comfortable relief and maintenance of the poore: for the neglecting of them is injustice, and a hande of theft against the poore.

provision for the poore ordinary.

Secondly, of true the word translated, *Almes*: it is very pithy, signifying *mercy* and *pitty*; whence wee may learne: First, what it is that makes our giving to the poore to be Almes: it is not the thing given, but the *mercifull* and *pitifull care of the giver*, be the thing never so small, as was the poore widows mite: and therefore all our almes must proceed from a pitifull heart. Secondly, if we with what a one that party must be that is to be releeved, namely, such a one as is to be pitied, not our lusty beggers, but infants, orphans, the lame, blinde, weake, maimed, and aged persons.

Why mercy is ioyned with Almes.

Thus much for the words: now followeth the Commandement itselfe: *Take heed that you giue not your Almes before mens, to be seen of them.* This Commandement tendeth to this end, to teach men how to avoid the unlawfull manner of giving Almes: for a good thing may be done in an ill manner, and usually men offend this way in their good deeds. Now

Scope.

A this Commandement prescribes a double circumspection in giving Almes: first, touching the ground: secondly, touching the end of Almes-giving. The *ground* of our Almes must not be the pride of our hearts: This Christ forewarnes us of, if we looke it should be good and acceptable in the sight of God. This is a point of great importance, and therefore for the better observing of it, I will here shew two points: I. What this pride is: II. Why it must bee so carefully avoided in our almes-deeds. By *pride* I meane not outward pride in apparell, but that which is inward in the soule, consisting partly in the minde, and partly in the will and affections.

A good ground of Almes giving.

How pride may be avoided.

Pride of heart.

Pride of minde is a corrupt disposition thereof, whereby a man thinkes himselfe to bee better, and more excellent than indeed he is: this was the sinne of the *Pharisee*, who boasted unto God of his owne goodnesse, Luke 18. 11, 12. And hence it come that the Church of *Laodicea* a *glorified in her selfe*, saying, *I am rich, and increased in wealth, and lacke nothing, when as indeed shee was poore, and blind, and miserable, and naked.* This conceit is most dangerous, especially in the point of grace, causing many to deceive their owne soules by thinking they have grace when they have none, and overweening that which they have. *Pride in will* is an inward affection, whereby a man is not contented with that estate wherein God hath placed him, but desires a better. This befell b *Adam* and *Eve*, who sought to be like unto *God himselfe*; and this taketh hold of most men in every age. Now from these two proceedeth that *practice of pride* in mans life, whereby hee endeavours to see what soever hee can for his owne praise and glory. This *pride* is not in some few persons alone, but in every man naturally that comes of *Adam*, Christ Jesus onely excepted. And where it takes place it is so strong, that it will not bee crossed: for rather than a man will not have his will in this, he will commit any sinne. This caused *Absalom* to banish his father out of his owne kingdome: and *Achitophel* to hang himselfe, when his counsell was refused: and some Popes (as histories makes mention) to bequeath their soules unto the Devill for the obtaining of the Popedome. And this is that inward corruption which Christ here forbids to bee the ground of our Almes-deeds.

Pride of minde.

a Rev. 3. 16.

Pride in will.

b Gen. 3.

Practice of pride.

II. Point. The reasons why this inward pride must be carefully avoided, bee these two: First, because whatsoever outward good worke the child of God can doe by grace, the same may a wicked man doe through pride: as conceive a prayer, preach the word, and practise the outward duties of repentance, of love, and such like: for pride is a sinne that will counterfeit grace, and man cannot discerne it, but God onely. Secondly, many other sinnes prevaile in the wicked, but pride is the sinne that troubleth the children of God; and when other sinnes die, then will pride revive; yea, it will arise out

Why pride must be avoided.

of grace it selfe: for the childe of God will be proud, because he is not proud: therefore *Paul* c must be *buffeted by the Messenger of Satan, lest he should be puffed up with abundance of revelations.*

c 2 Cor. 12. 7.

Now the way to avoid this dangerous sinne stands in two things: first, we must be carefull to *know the pride* of our owne heart, for every man hath it in him more or lesse, and the more we see it, the lesse it is; but the lesse we see it, the more it is in us indeed: and though wee know nothing by our selves, yet let us suspect our selves hereof, and labour to see it in our hearts; for he that is the most humbled, is not altogether free from this inward pride: secondly, when we see our pride, we must labour to *subdue it*; which we shall doe, first, by considering the judgements of God upon this sinne: Were not our *first parents* cast out of Paradise when they would needs be as gods? And *Herod* was *eaten up of wormes* when hee tooke unto himselfe the glory due unto God, Act. 12. 23. Therefore *Peter* d saith, *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.* A man that would beg an almes, must not goe in proud apparell; and so he that would procure the favour of God, must not come with a proud heart. Secondly, we must search into our selves, and labour to see our owne wants and corruptions, as our blindnesse of minde and ignorance, our unbelefe, &c. and the sight of our sinnes will be a meanes to humble us: for they that feele no wants in themselves cannot choose but be puffed up. Thirdly, we must meditate upon the death and passion of Christ, which he endured for our redemption; how he sweat water and bloud, and suffered the wrath of God both in soule and body for our sinnes; now how can a man thinke that Christ endured all this for him, and yet bee not cast downe with the sight of his owne sinnes, which had a part in the cause of all the curse that caus'd Christ to cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

d 1 Pet. 5. 5.

An offend in Almes-giving.

The second branch of circumspection in Almes-giving here commanded, respects the end thereof: *We must not give Almes to be seene of men*: that is, to get praise and fame among men. This caveat Christ gives for a weightie cause: for the corruption of mans Nature through the instigation of the devill, causeth every one almost to doe all good workes for wrong ends: why doe many men toyle themselves so much in their ordinary callings? is it not partly for honour, partly for pleasure, partly for profit? and doe not the most men propound this end to themselves herein, to maintaine their families? But though this be a good and commendable thing, yet neither that, nor the rest are the right ends for which man should labour and travell: the *right end* of all, is the glorie of God in mans good, or the good of man in Gods glory; now when our good works proceed from an humble heart, which sincerely intends the glory of God in mans good, then is

A the worke pleasing unto God. Other ends or beginnings doe prophane mens labours: and therefore Christ giveth this caveat, to look both to the beginning, and the end of our Almes-deeds.

Thus much of the commandement: the reason of it is this; *or else ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven*: so the words are, *ye have no reward*; and they are very significant, importing thus much; If you doe your workes from an humble heart, for Gods glory in mans good, then you have a reward laid up for you in heaven: which though it appeares not presently, yet it is as sure as if you had it already in possession: but if you doe not so, you have no reward laid up for you by your heavenly father.

B From this reason in generall we may gather, that hee which hath grace to doe, if it bee but one good worke (as to give Almes) upon a good ground, and for a good end, shall never perish, but shall receive eternall life: which may be a notable motive to provoke every man to doe good works: as also it proves that the child of God can never perish or finally fall away: for nothing is lost that is laid up with God.

More particularly, first, observe that the word *reward* is not taken properly, but by resemblance, thus: like as a labourer after hee hath done his worke, receiveth his wages; so the child of God having done that which God commandeth him, receiveth a reward. Secondly, it is said *of your father*, to signifie that this reward is not merited, but is the free gift of a father unto his children. Lastly, Christ saith *your Father*, speaking to all his hearers, among whom was *Judas*, whom else-where hee calls a devil, and others whom hee knew to be none of Gods children, and yet being here a preacher and *Minister of circumcision* (as the Apostle e speaketh) hee leaveth the secret judgement unto God, and following the judgements of hope and charitie, taketh all his hearers, to bee the children of God: which is a notable president to all Gods Ministers, for Christ here preaching of love, practiseth it; and so ought his servants doe. This also condemneth the practice of those, that upon a little falling out will not sticke to call others damned wretches, or reprobates; there is no charity in such censures: for love alwaies hopes the best, 1 Cor. 13.

C

e Rom. 15. 8.

D

V. 2 *Therefore when thou giveest thine Almes, thou shalt not make a trumpet to be blown before thee, as the hypocrites doe in the Synagogues and in the streets, to be praised of men: verely I say unto you, they have their reward.*

Here Christ propoundeth by way of prohibition, a particular example of the corrupt manner of Almes-giving, proceeding from pride of heart and ambition, lowes wed from the practice of the Scribes and Pharisies, and withall beaneweth in the end of the verse an effectuall reason to move men to circumspection about the ground and end of their Almes-deeds.

The Exposition. The originall is this: *Thou shalt not blow a trumpet before thee*; so that our translation doth also expound the words of Christ, according to the common rule of Divines; that *words of fact are oftentimes put for words of speech*: which being well observed, will cleare many places from false interpretation. Exod. 12. 2. God saith to *Moses, Sanctifie unto me all the first borne* and to *Josua, Make thee sharpe knives, and circumcise the sonnes of Israel*, that is, command them to be sanctified, and circumcised. Jer. 1. 10. *I have set thee over nations and kingdomes* (saith God to Jeremie) *to pluck up, to root out, to destroy, and throw down, to build, and to plant*: that is, to preach, and by preaching to pronounce that The Lord will doe these things. Joh. 4. 1. *Christ is said to baptize*, that is, (as the next verse imports) hee commanded his Disciples to baptize: and Act. 10. 15. God is said to *purifie* things; that is, hee pronounceth things to be pure. *As hypocrites doe in the Synagogues*. The word *hypocrite*, betokeneth one that takes upon him to represent the person of another as players doe, who sometime represent mighty Kings, otherwhiles poore beggers, and to them it properly belongeth. Now by resemblance it is applyed to any, that outwardly feigne themselves to have that goodnesse and holinesse which they have not: for hypocrisie is nothing else, but a shew of that goodnesse outwardly, which indeed is not in the heart. Now in this instance is included a second reason of the former Commandement, touching the manner of Almes-giving, serving to make all Christs hearers circumspect, both for the ground and end of their good workes: and the reason stands thus; *That which hypocrites doe, you must not doe: but they doe their Almes to be praised of men*, as is plaine in this example: *and therfore you are not to give almes to be seene and praised of men.*

Out of this example we may learne these Instructions: First, that it is the propertie of an hypocrite to doe good workes, for false ends: as *to be seene of men, and to be praised of men*: for indeed an hypocrite in his heart makes choice not of God, but of men to be the Judges and approvers of his good works. And this is grosse hypocrisie, because hereby the honour due to God is taken from him and given to men, for God ought to bee the Judge and approver of all our actions.

Now as Christ layes this sinne upon the Scribes and Pharisies, so ought every one of us to lay it on our selves, considering our selves as wee are by nature out of Christ; for so wee make not God, but men the Judges and approvers of our actions: this will hereby appeare evidently, for when we doe a good thing, and yet thereby incurre the disprise of men, are wee not more grieved therat, than when by sinne we offend God himselfe? which could not bee, but that our hearts doe more respect the censure of men, than of the Lord. And to cleare this point yet further; consider this; that the root of hypocrisie and of Atheisme is in our nature, whereby naturally wee doe these three things, wee *love*, *feare* and *trust* in men more than in God, and therefore doe make men the Judges of our actions. 1. for *love*: are wee not grieved when wee our selves or our friends are dishonoured; and on the contrary, when wee our selves or our friends are praised, are we not glad and rejoice? But when God is dishonoured, who is grieved? Or whose heart doth leape for joy, when God is glorified? which argues plainely that our affection of love is more inclined towards our selves and to our friends, than unto God. 2. for *feare*; are not most men more afraid when they offend a mortall man like themselves, than when they offend the everliving God? 3. for *trust* and *confidence* in the time of affliction; most men are more comforted if some friend promise them helpe, than they are by all the promises of God himselfe in his Word. But men will say, that they *love* and *feare*, and *trust* in God above all: This indeed is the ordinary profession of ignorant people; but the truth is, that by nature wee refuse God to bee our Judge and our approver, and appeale unto them: and therefore wee must labour to see and feele, and to bewaile this hypocrisie, and to be indued with the contrary grace whereby wee may simply and sincerely seeke to bee approved of God in all our actions.

Secondly, in this example note one evident cause of the disorder which was among the Jewes in respect of their poore: for they begged in the high wayes, in the streets of the cities, and gates of the Temple, flat against Gods commandement, *who would not have such a beggar in Israel*: other occasions there were of this abuse, but one principall cause is here noted; namely, that private persons were permitted to give their private almes unto the poore with their owne hands in publike places. This was a great disorder, and the cause of many beggers: for private men could not discerne the particular wants of all that begged so; and therefore God had otherwise provided for them in the old Testament, as hee sheweth before. And in the new Testament there were chosen faithfull men called *Deacons* in every congregation, who were to looke unto their poore, to collect for them, and to distribute to every one according to their necessity. It is not unlawfull for a private man to give Almes in publike place if need require: but where the poore are no otherwise provided for, than by such

Matth. 6. ver. 2.

We make men, not God, the Judge of our actions.

Sinne goes not alone.

A notable cause of many beggers among the Jewes.

Matth. 6. vers. 3, 4.

such private releefe, it is a great disorder: like as it is in a family, where the children and servants know not where and when to have their dinners: for the poore are Gods children in his family, and ought to bee provided for in better sort, than by such private releefe: and therefore where good order is wanting for provision for the poore, it ought in conscience to be begun, and where it is begun, men must carefully maintaine and continue the same.

Thirdly, in this example of a corrupt manner of Almes-giving, see the concurrence of sundrie sinnes. First, here is noted *hypocrisie*, which were enough to condemne a man; but yet with this there goes *ambition*, and with both, an *open contempt and breach of good order*, in providing for the poore; which shewes evidently that no sinne goes alone, but ordinarily hath his companions: for sinnes are so infolded one in another, that he which commits one, is not free from any other: this may plainely bee shewed by many examples. In *Adams* sinne there was the breach of the whole law in every Commandement, either directly or by consequence: for hee shewed evident want of love to God, in beleeving Satan more than God; therein hee chose Satan for his God; hee worshipped Satan, and tooke Gods name in vaine; he shewed also evident want of brotherly love, for hereby he became a murherer not onely of himselfe, but of all his posteritie: and thus doe sins concurre in every wicked action, in which regard it may be said with *Iames*, *that he which faileth in one Commandement, is guilty of all*: which must admonish us to make conscience of every sinne: for we cannot live in any one, but we must needs runne into many other.

Verely I say unto you, they have their reward. These words containe the reason of the former prohibition, wherein we may see the vanity of this giving of Almes: for the praise of men is all their reward; they have none with God, as we shewed in the former verse.

v. 3 *But when thou doest thine Almes, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth:*

4 *That thine Almes may bee seene in secret, and thy father that seeth in secret, he will reward thee openly.*

The meaning.

These words containe Christs second Commandement touching the *manner* of Almes-giving, with the reason thereof. The Commandement is in the third verse, and it beareth this sense; that if the left hand could understand, yet it should not know what our right hand gave; and therefore much more must wee conceale the same from men. Yet here Christ forbids not all giving of Almes in open place, or in the sight of men, but his meaning is to restraine the ambition of the heart after the praise of men: the giver must not intend or desire that men should see him give almes, that they might praise him: but his heart must simply and sincerely seeke to approve it selfe unto God. This will appeare to be the right meaning of our Saviour Christ, by comparing this verse with the first: for here Christ reneweth the Commandement there given, and forbiddeth the corrupt desire of the heart after vaine glory in the giving of Almes.

Now for our better understanding of this commandement, first, we will shew what is here forbidden; and secondly, what is commanded. Here are two things forbidden; first, all desire or intention of mens beholding of us, when we give our Almes: secondly, all respect and intent to please our selves in Almes-giving: for the left hand must not know what the right hand giveth. The thing here commanded is this, that he which gives Almes, must do it simply, intending and desiring onely to please God, and to approve his worke unto God without all by-respects of mens praise or approbation.

Here then first is condemned the doctrine of the Church of Rome, which teacheth men to doe good workes, with opinion of meriting life everlasting thereby at the hands of God: for that is farre more than to doe them for this end to get praise of men, which yet is here forbiddenand therefore the other must needs be abominable.

Vse 1. Rhem. on Mat. 6. fol. 2.

2 How to doe good workes well.

Secondly, seeing in our well-doing wee must simply intend to approve our selves unto God, it shall not bee amisse here to shew, how we may so doe our good workes that God may approve thereof. Hereunto foure things are required: *faith, love, humility*, and *sincerity* or *simplicity*. For the first, in every good worke there must be a two-fold faith: *Justifying faith*, and *a generall faith*. *Justifying faith*, whereby the person doing the worke must be reconciled to God, and stand before God a true member of Christ: for of this it is said, [a] *without faith it is impossible to please God*. And Christ saith, [b] *Every branch that beareth not fruit in me, the father taketh away: and without me ye can doe nothing*: where it is plaine, that whosoever would doe a worke acceptable to God, must first be in Christ: and the reason is evident: for first the person working must bee acceptable to God, before his worke can bee approved: but no mans person is approved of God, before he bee in Christ: and therefore justifying faith, whereby wee are united unto Christ, is chiefly necessary. By *generall faith*, I meane that, whereby a man beleeves that the worke hee doth is pleasing unto God. Hereof [c] *Paul* saith, *Whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne*. A worke may bee good in it selfe, and yet sinfull in the doer, if hee want this generall faith. Now unto this

1. Justifiedly.

a Heb. 11. 6.

b John 15. 2, 5.

c Rom. 14. 23.

this are two things required: first, a word of God commanding the worke, and prescribing the manner of doing it: secondly, a promise of blessing upon the doing of it: for every good worke hath his promise, both of the things of this life, and of a better: these things must bee knowne and beleeved: upon these grounds wee must pray, give Almes, and doe every good worke, and so shall they bee approved of God. Now by this double faith required in every good worke, we see, how those that are bound to practise good workes, (as every one is more or lesse) ought to labour to bee acquainted with the word of God, that they may do their works in faith: for else though the worke be good, it may bee sinne in them because it is not of faith; which is the miserable state of ignorant persons, who through want of faith, cannot doe good workes in a good manner.

[a] In love

The second thing required, in the doing of a good worke, is *love*: love (I say) joyned with faith: for *faith worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 9. Indeed faith doth some things of it selfe; as apprehend, receive, and apply Christ and his righteousnesse to the believer, which is the proper worke of faith: but other things it doth by the helpe of another: and so faith bringeth forth the works of mercy, and performeth the duties of the first and second table; not properly by it selfe, but by the helpe of love: and therefore here I say, that in every good worke is required that love whereby faith worketh. Now the kindes of love required in well-doing are two: first the love of God in Christ: for as wee know God in Christ, so must wee love him secondly, the love of our brethren, yea of our enemies: for howsoever in our understanding these two may be distinguished, yet in practice they must never bee severed; but must alwaies goe hand in hand, to move us to doe the workes of mercy, and all the duties of our calling: as *Paul* saith of himselfe, and the rest of the Apostles, *The love of God constrameth us to preach the Gospel*, 2 Cor. 5. 14.

[b] In humility.

The third thing required in doing a good worke well is *humiltie*, whereby a man esteemeth himselfe, to be but a voluntary and reasonable instrument of God therein. This vertue will make a man give the honour of the worke to the principall Agent, that is, to God himselfe: who worketh in us both to will and to doe of his good pleasure.

[c] In simplicity.

The fourth thing required in well-doing, is *simplicity*, or *singlenesse of heart*: whereby a man in doing a good worke, intendeth simply and directly to honour and please God, without all by-respects to his owne praise, or the pleasing of men. This is a speciall vertue directing a man to the right end in every good worke, which is the obedience and honour of God, in mans good. This vertue was in *Paul*,[d] who *in simplicity and godly pureness had his conversation in the world*: thus he preached the Gospel: and so ought we to doe every good worke. Now that

[d] 2 Cor. 1. 12.

A this sincerity may shew it selfe, wee must take heed of a speciall vice which is contrary unto it, namely, the *guile of the spirit*, mentioned Psalm. 32. 2. which maketh a man intend and propound false ends and by-regards in doing good workes; as his owne praise and delight, to please men thereby. And that we may avoid this spirituall guile, we are to know, that it may and doth usually prevaile with men in foure cases: I. When those doe practise vertue in whom God only restraines the contrary vice: thus civill honest men that have no religion, may practise justice, temperance, mercy, and other morall vertues, because they are not inclined to injustice, intemperance, and the contrary vices: but these actions in them are no good

[e] Spirituall guile in well-doing.

[f] It prevailes in 4 cases.

B workes before God, because they proceed not from sanctified hearts, sincerely intending to obey and glorifie God hereby. II. When men doe good workes for feare of divine justice and the penalties of mens lawes; and such for the most part is the repentance of the sicke: I grant indeed, that some doe truly repent in this estate, but commonly such repentance is unsound, and proceedeth not from a single heart, but from feare; whereby, being under Gods hand, they seeke to avoid his judgement. Such also are the outward duties of Religion, performed by our common Protestants, who come to Church, and receive the Sacraments chiefly for custome sake, and to avoid the danger of mens lawes. III. When men doe good

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C workes for the honour and praise of men. This is a dangerous thing: upon this ground a man may preach the Word, use prayer, and professe the Gospel; yea, and be zealous for Gods glorie as *Iehu* was: and hence it comes, that many fal away to loosnesse of life from a strict profession of religion, because they received not the truth in simplicitie of heart, with purpose onely to obey and please God, but rather to get the praise of men. IV. When men doe good works from some corruption of heart prevailing in them; as when a man is both proud and covetous, yet more proud than covetous: covetousnesse bids him not give to the poore; but yet pride desiring the praise of men prevailing in him, causeth him to give to the poore. And so

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D when covetousnesse prevailes in a proud man, it will cause him to abstaine from riot and proud apparell, which yet his pride would perswade him unto. In all these cases Spirituall guile corrupts the worke that otherwise is good in it selfe: and therefore we must have a watchfull eye unto singlenesse of heart in our well-doing and to the rest of the vertues before-named, that so we may bee able to say with good conscience, that our workes are such as God approveth.

V. 4. *That thine Almes may be secret, and thy Father that seeth in secret, he will re-*

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ward thee openly.

Here is the *reason* whereby Christ inforceth the former Commandement; and it hath two parts: the first is drawne from a speciall propertie in God, *to see in secret*: the second is from his bounty, in *rewarding openly*.

God the secret seer.

For the first, the words are thus in the original, *And thy father which is a seer in secret*: for the word here used signifieth a *discerning seer*: whereby Christ would teach us, that God sees and beholds things that no man can see, even the secret thoughts and desires of mans heart.

Vse 1.

Hence we must learne three things: I. To examine our selves strictly not onely of our grosse and open sinnes, which all the world may see; but also of our most inward and hidden corruptions; and when wee cannot see them, yet we must suspect our selves of our secret wants; for though men know them not, no nor wee our selves, yet God the *secret seer* beholdeth them. II. Never to hide our sinnes within our selves, but freely to lay them open before God to our owne shame, yea, to confesse our unknowne sinnes: we must not like *Adam*, sew fig-leaves together to cover our nakednesse, or flie from God thinking to hide our selves from his sight: for hee discerneth in secret. III. To be carefull not onely to doe good workes, but also to doe them in an holy manner, from good grounds, and to a right end: for *God seeth secrets*, and will not bee shifted off with false

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B shews. [a] *David* saith, *I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies, because all my waies are before thee*. And the rather must we be moved hereunto, because God knowing what is in mans heart, doth oftentimes prove men with temptations that he may discover the guile of their hearts: and therefore that wee may escape the judgements of God due unto hypocrisie, wee must labour to doe all good duties in singlenesse of heart.

[a] Psal. 119. 168.

The second reason drawne from Gods bountie unto them that in singlenesse of heart doe good workes, is in these words; *he will reward thee openly*: wherein he preventeth this objection, which some of his hearers might make against his former precept. If I may not doe good

C workes to be seene of men, then shall I lose my labour: Christ answers, Not so: for *God the father will reward thee openly*, if thou doe good from a single heart, onely respecting the praise and honour of God in mans good. If it be asked, how this can stand with that saying of Christ, Ioh. 5. 21. *That the father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son*: I answer, that in regard of deliberation, of authority, and consent, the last judgement shall be executed by the whole Trinitie: but yet in regard of immediate execution, the Father judgeth not, but Christ onely: for hee alone giveth the sentence both of absolution and condemnation.

Of praise.

The second reason teacheth us sundry things concerning praise. First, that *God himselfe is the*

The Author.

A *sole author of true praise*: *Paul* saith, *he which praiseth himselfe is not allowed, but he whom the Lord praiseth*: where hee compareth the world to a Theater, wherein men are actors, and men and Angels bee spectators; but God alone is the *Iudge*, who giveth praise and good name to every one that deserveth it, not onely in this life, but in the world to come: in regard whereof, wee must endeavour our selves to doe all our good workes, that God himselfe may approve thereof: to seeke the praise of men, is a fond thing, seeing that not man, but God is the author of true praise: yea, this must teach us not to depend upon than for praise and commendation for the good things wee doe, but upon God himselfe, from whom all true praise commeth.

[b] 2 Cor. 10. 18.

Secondly, that *God* as he is a *father*, is *the sole author of praise*, for Christ saith, your father wil reward you. Now God is *our father* onely in Christ, and therefore our union with Christ is the ground of all true praise: *He is a true Israelite* (saith [b] *Paul*) *which is one within, and the circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God*. This then discovereth the errour of the world, in seeking after praise and reputation; for some seeke it in the comelinesse of their body, some in apparell, and some in learning, &c. but all these are wrong meanes; the right way to get true praise, is to bee in Christ, and to have an humble and sanctified heart, set purposely to keepe Gods Commandement: Psal. 119. 22. *David prayed God to remove from him shame and contempt, because he kept Gods testimonies*: as though the keeping of Gods Commandements had beene the onely meanes to avoid contempt, and to procure true praise and fame.

4 The ground.

Thirdly, that *the life to come is the only time of true praise*, for Christ here saith, *he shall reward thee openly*: that is, in the last day: 1 Cor. 4. 5. *When the Lord shall come, then shall every one have praise of God*. This must teach us, not to care for the contempt of the world which followeth our profession, so that our conversation bee godly; but to rest patiently contented, because it is the lot and portion of Gods children, and our sinnes deserve greater reproach, alwaies remembring, that the time of our praise is yet to come. Yea, hence we must learne not to aime at our owne praise, in things of this life but wholly to seeke the glory of God in all things; for if we seeke his glory now, the time will come when he will glorifie us.

3 The time.

Fourthly, that the *praise* that God shall give his children in the end of the world, *shall bee open and manifest*, before all men and all Angels, both good and bad, when they shall stand to be judged by Jesus Christ: and this is true praise which shall never have end, whereunto the praise of men is not comparable: we count highly of applause and reputation with earthly Princes, and all men honour him whom the Prince commends: how much more then shall they be

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advanced, whom God himſelfe ſhould vouchſafe to praiſe and commend.

verse 5 And when thou praieſt, be not as the hypocrites: for they love to ſtand and pray in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, becauſe they would bee ſeene of men: verely I ſay unto you, they have their reward.

In this verſe and the reſt to the fourteenth, Chriſt intreateth of the duties of prayer, wherein hee dealeth as in the former point touching Almes-giving: for firſt, hee forbids a two-fold vice in prayer: *Hypocriſie*, and *Babling*, and then teacheth the contrary vertues and the right practice of prayer. The vice of *Hypocriſie* in praier is forbidden in this firſt verſe, and the contrary vertue injoined in the text.

The Expoſition. *When thou praieſt*] To pray properly *is to intreat of God the gift of ſome good thing concerning our ſelves*: and in this ſenſe it is onely one part of that holy worſhip of God, which is called *Invocation*: for 1 Tim. 2. 1. the Apoſtle maketh foure kindes or parts of *invocation*: to wit, I. *Supplication*, when we intreat God to remove ſome evill from us. II. *Prayer*, whereby wee begge at the hands of God the gift of ſome good thing unto us: and theſe two concerne our ſelves. The III. is *Intercaſſion*, when as wee intreat the Lord to grant ſome good thing unto our brethren, or to remove ſome evill from them. The IV. is *Thankſgiving*, whereby wee give laud and thankes to God for blaſſings received, either by our ſelves, or by our brethren. Now in this place *Prayer* is not to bee taken ſtrictly for one part of invocation, but generally for the whole worſhip of God by invocation; as it is commonly taken of us, and often uſed in Scripture, one part being put for the whole. *Be not as the hypocrites*] that is, do not as they doe in prayer; by *Hypocrites* hee underſtandeth principally the Jewiſh teachers, the *Scribes* and *Phariſes*, for at them hee aimeth in this part of his Sermon. For *they love to ſtand and pray in the Synagogues and in the ſtreets.*] We muſt not here conceive that Chriſt condemnes altogether this geſture of ſtanding in prayer as unlawfull: for himſelfe prayed *ſtanding when* [c] *he raiſed up Lazarus*: and the primitive Church in their aſſemblies called [d] *Stations*, praied ſtanding: but hee reproveth here the abuſe of this geſture in theſe Jewiſh teachers. For firſt, they uſed this geſture to a wrong end, namely, thereby to get the praiſe of men: becauſe ſtanding is the fitteſt geſture which a man can uſe in prayer to make him bee ſeene of others. Secondly, theſe Scribes and Phariſes thought themſelves more righteous than all other men, and therefore judged that they had no need to humble themſelves ſo much either in ſoule or body as the Publicans and ſinners did. Againe, Chriſt here condemneth not the action of prayer in theſe places, the *Synagogues* and the *ſtreets*: for no man was ever forbidden of God to pray in any place. The Patriarks were not tyed to any place: and under the Law, howſoever the Temple was the place appointed for Gods outward worſhip in ſacrificing, and ſuch like, yet even then it was lawfull for the Jewes to pray in any place; and after Chriſts comming *Paul* [e] *willeth, that men pray every where, lifting up pure hands unto God*: but here is condemned this groſſe fault of theſe *Scribes* and *Phariſes*, that they minded to pray no where elſe, but in theſe open and publike places, which is expreſſed by this phraſe, *they love to ſtand and pray*: So that in a word this is the meaning of this verſe; *You my hearers, when you pray, take heed of the hypocriſie of the Scribes and Phariſes, for they regard onely the praiſe of men, and therefore doe uſe ſuch geſture in prayer, and chuſe ſuch places to pray in, that they may beſt bee ſeene of men.* Where we ſee, he directly condemnes their hypocriſie, as well in reſpect of the *ground* thereof which was *the pride of their hearts*, and not Gods grace: as alſo in regard of *the end* thereof, which was *the praiſe of men*, and not the glory of God.

The uſe. I. Whereas Chriſt ſaith, *When thou praieſt*: hee taketh it for granted, that all men of yeares muſt pray: and whereas he condemnes the falſe forme and manner thereof, he teacheth us that it is a moſt neceſſary thing for all that have diſcretion, to exerciſe themſelves religiouſly in this dutie of prayer. And becauſe our Saviour here urgeth this dutie ſo much, I will here ſhew the *neceſſitie of prayer*: which may appeare unto us by ſundry reaſons: I. *Prayer* is one of the moſt principall parts of Gods worſhip: for herein wee acknowledge him to bee the giver of all goodneſſe, the ſearcher and knower of our hearts; and hereby we teſtifie the faith, hope, and confidence we have in God. And prayer is called [e] *the calves of our lips*, becauſe it is a ſacrifice well pleaſing unto God. II. By prayer wee doe obtaine, and alſo continue and preſerve unto our ſelves every good grace and bleſſing of God, eſpecially ſuch as concerne eternall life: for God promiſeth his ſpirit to them that aske it by prayer: and the firſt converſion of a ſinner, howſoever it bee the free gift of God, yet by Gods grace moving and inabling a man thereunto, is obtained by prayer; and ſo are all the good graces following our converſion, both gotten and increaſed. III. The true gift of prayer is a pledge of the ſpirit of Adoption: and therefore *Zacharie* cals the *ſpirit of prayer*, the *ſpirit of grace*. And *Paul* [g] ſaith, *The ſpirit helpes our infirmities, even the Spirit of our Adoption, which teacheth us to cry, Abba, father.* IV. By prayer wee have ſpirituall communion and familiarity with God: for in the preaching of the Word, God ſpeaketh to us; as I in prayer wee ſpeake to God, and the more we pray, the nearer and greater fellowſhip we have with God: which one reaſon (if there were no more) is ſufficient to perſwade us of the neceſſitie of prayer, and to move us unto diligence therein.

[a] Matth. 14. 19.

[b] 1 Tim. 2. 8.

[c] Hoſ. 14. 2.

[d] Luke 11. 13.

[e] Zach. 12.

[f] Rom. 8. 26. 15.

But ſundry objections are made againſt the neceſſity of prayer: 1. It is ſaid God knowes our thoughts before wee pray, and therefore it is needleſſe to expreſſe them by praier unto him. *Anſw.* Wee pray not, to acquaint God with our ſuites, or with our hearts, as though hee knew them not, but to performe obedience unto his commandement, who requireth this dutie at our hands. Againe, we pray unto God, to honour him, in acknowledging him to be the knower of our hearts, the giver of all good thinges, the ſtay of our faith and hope, in whom onely we put all our truſt and confidence.

Object. 1.

Object. 2. Whether we pray or not, God will give us the bleſſings which he means to beſtow on us. *Anſw.* This is flat Atheiſme: and yet we muſt diſtinguiſh of Gods bleſſings, for ſome are common bleſſings which God oft gives to men without their asking, becauſe they ſerve to preſerve nature: as raigne and fruitfull ſeaſons, food, raiment, &c. Act. 14. 16. and yet even theſe common bleſſings muſt bee prayed for: Phil. 4. 6. *In all things let your requeſts be made knowne to God*: and *James* [h] ſaith, *You leſt and have not, becauſe ye aske not*: Pſal. 106. 23. *Moſes prayer* ſaves the people from deſtruction. Others are ſpeciall bleſſings of the elect, and theſe muſt always be ſought and obtained by prayer.

[h] Iam. 4. 2.

Object. 3. God hath decreed all events, and every thing ſhall ſo fall out as he hath appointed, and therefore its needleſſe to pray, and oftentimes its but the croſſing of Gods will. *Anſ.* The reaſon is naught: for as God hath decreed the event of all things, ſo likewiſe hee hath appointed the meanes whereby his decree ſhall be effected: and *prayer* many times, is a principall meanes to bring Gods will to paſſe: 1 King. 18. 1. God ſhewed to *Eliah* that he would ſend raine in Iſrael after that long drought, and *yet the Prophet crouched unto the earth, and put his face between his knees*; no doubt humbling himſelfe in prayer to God for it, as S. [k] *James* ſaith. Where we may ſee, that prayer is not contrary to Gods decree, but a ſubordinate meanes to bring the ſame to paſſe: and therefore wee muſt rather reaſon thus, that becauſe God hath decreed the event of all things, and hath appointed prayer as a meanes to effect ſundry of his decrees, therefore we muſt uſe it.

[i] verſ. 42.

[k] Iames 5. 18.

Vſe. Considering then that prayer is neceſſary, notwithſtanding all that can be ſaid againſt it, wee muſt learne with ſpeciall reverence to give our ſelves unto this duty, both publikely in the aſſemblies of the Saints, and privately in our families, being maſters and governours: for no family ought to want this morning and evening Sacrifice of prayer and thankſgiving: yea, wee muſt pray by our ſelves particularly in regard of our particular wants. Indeed the moſt doe thus plead for themſelves, that they uſe to pray often: but the truth is, that the common practice of our people in prayer is nothing but lip-labour and a mocking of God: for what be their prayers, but the lying over the ten Commandements and the Creed, which are no prayers: Yea, their repetition of the Lords prayer without underſtanding or devotion, is no prayer with God, when they do it only of cuſtome, and reſt in the worke done. But there is required another manner of prayer than this. And to incite us unto it, let us conſider the worthy examples of Gods ſervants herein: *Moſes* prayed for the ſaving of the Iſraelites *fourty dayes, and fourty nights without meat or drinke*: *David* praied *ſeven times a day*: and our *Saviour Chriſt ſpent whole nights in prayer*. Now theſe examples were written for our learning, to reach us to addict our ſelves to this holy duty whereby our hearts ſpeake unto God. The want hereof is the cauſe of the common Atheiſme that is in the world, of injuſtice and cruelty in mens callings, of ſwearing, pride, and backbiting in mens lives: for if men would often ſet themſelves in the preſence of God, by unfained invocation, the remembrance thereof would ſtill be before their eyes, and cauſe them to abſtaine from all theſe iniquities: for who being ſtained with ſuch tranſgreſſions durſt preſent himſelfe before the Majeſtie of God, who is a conſuming fire againſt all ſinne and wickedneſſe, having *fiery eyes* to ſee their ſinnes, and *feet of braſſe* to bruiſe them in peeces that will not repent.

D Deut. 9. 18, 19.

Pſal. 119. 164. Luke 6. 12.

Rev. 2. 23, 24.

Secondly, in this prohibition againſt hypocriſie in prayer wee may ſee, that to conceive a prayer, and to make profeſſion of religion may for the outward worke, as well bee performed from pride of heart as from the grace of God: carnall men may doe that in pride, which Gods children doe by grace, as we ſhewed in the former point of Almes-giving: that therefore which Chriſt ſaid of hearing the Word, *take heed how you heare*, muſt be: conceived to bee ſpoken to us of prayer and the profeſſion of religion, *take heed how you pray, and how you profeſſe religion*. And indeed before wee pray, wee ought to enter into our harts, and there to ſearch out our corruptions diligently, that wee may be able to diſcerne in our ſelves betweene *pride*, and *Gods grace*; and to perceive upon what ground we pray, that it be not from a damnable pride, but from the ſaving grace of Gods holy ſpirit.

Thirdly, in this prohibition Chriſt condemnes this falſe end of prayer, when men doe it to *have praiſe of men*; whereby we may ſee, that it is a thing incident to the profeſſors of

the Goſpell, to doe the duties of religion, for the approbation of men, which notably bewraies the hypocriſie of our hearts, which naturally have more reſpect to men, than to the Lord, eventhen when wee have to deale with God himſelfe. Thus did the Scribes and Phariſes, and it is to be feared, the ſame fault is common among us: for men are ſarre more forward and carefull to performe the publike duties of religion, in the aſſemblies of the Church, than private duties either in their families, or by themſelves: Many will pray in the Church, that never regard private prayer at home. Againe, in performing publike duties, men have more care of the outward action, than of truth and ſincerite in the heart; and many ſtudy more for fit words to delight mens eares, than for good affections, which God approveth; for what is the cauſe that many ancient profeſſors, when they come to die, know not how to commend their ſoules to God? Surely, this eſpecially, that in the whole courſe of their profeſſion, they more reſpected men than God; and therefore in the time of death, when they muſt needs deale with God indeed, they know not what to doe, nor how to behave themſelves.

Vnreverence in prayer.

Lattly, Chriſt here reproves their behaviour in prayer, which was ſtanding, without all humbling of themſelves, either in ſoule or body. This is a thing incident to many in our congregations, who uſe to ſhew no manner of reverence or humility in the time of prayer; but either ſtand, or ſit, as though they had no need to humble themſelves; or elſe intended onely that men ſhould ſee them. But wee muſt know, that howſoever the word of God preſcribes no peculiar geſture in this action, yet it is not a thing indifferent, either to uſe, or not to uſe, ſome ſeemely geſture of humiliation in this worſhip of God; but ſome muſt needs be uſed, to expreſſe and further the humilitie of the heart, which is chiefly required: Iſay 6. 2. the Seraphims ſtanding before God, *cover their feet and faces with their wings*, in regard of Gods preſence: and the poore Publicane that *prayed with the Phariſee*, howſoever he prayed ſtanding, yet [m] *he caſt downe his countenance, and ſmote himſelfe on the breſt*, to teſtifie his humiliation. Yea, Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, when hee bare the puniſhment of our ſinnes in the garden, fell downe upon his face, and prayed: thus alſo did [a] *Moſes* and *Aaron*, [b] *Eliah*, [c] *Ezra*, and [d] *Daniel* humble themſelves. And it hath alwaies beene the practice of Gods ſervants in prayer, by ſome convenient geſture of the body, to expreſſe the humilitie of their hearts; which checketh the cuſtome of our common people in prayer, who are ſo farre from bringing a broken heart to God, which is the thing hee chiefly requires, that they know not what to aske; and many there be that will not ſubmit themſelves to ſich outward geſture, as might expreſſe their inward humiliation. Theſe things are farre unſeemely for Gods people, and therefore let us learne to humble our ſelves at Gods footſtoole, firſt in our very hearts, and withall, we muſt be carefull to teſtifie the ſame by ſome convenient outward humiliation.

m Luke 18. 13.

a Numb. 16. 45.
b 1 King. 18. 42.
c Ezr. 9. 5.
d Dan. 6. 10.

A

v. 6 *But when thou prayeſt, enter into thy chamber, and when thou haſt ſhut thy doore, pray to thy father which is in ſecret, and thy father which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly.*

B

Sincerity in prayer.

Chriſt having forbidden hypocriſie in the former verſe, doth here command the contrary vertue; namely, *ſincerity*, ſetting downe the right manner of prayer to God in that behalfe. Now becauſe the words are not to bee taken in that ſenſe, which at the firſt reading they ſeeme to beare; therefore for the better underſtanding of them, I will here lay downe two grounds: 1. That in this place our Saviour Chriſt doth not forbid publike prayer in the congregation, or in publike places; for publike prayer is Gods ordinance: *Where two or three* (ſaith [e] Chriſt) *be gather. d together in my name, there am I in the middle among them: and whatſoever they ſhall deſire, ſhall be given them of my Father.* Againe, publike prayer ſerves for moſt worthy uſes, for which it may be maintained; as firſt, to make mens prayers unto God more fervent and effectuall; as in the common-wealth, 2 private mans ſupplication is not ſo much reſpected, as when a whole incorporation, or a whole ſhire make petition to the Prince. Secondly, by publike prayer a man profeſſeth himſelfe to be a member of Gods Church, and one that ſevereth himſelfe from all prophane ſocieties and companies of men in the world. Thirdly, publike prayer ſerves to ſtirre up zeale in them that be cold and backward: for herein they are made acquainted with Gods bleſſings, they are left to ſee their owne wants, and they have the good example of Gods children. 2. *Ground. That private prayer* (though it be Gods own ordinance) *is not heredirectly commanded*: for looke what was forbidden in the former verſe, the contrary thereto is here commanded; but Chriſt did not ſimply there forbid publike prayer, hee aimed at an higher thing therein: namely, hypocriſie, and therefore here he commandeth not private prayer directly, but intendeth the right manner thereof, for ſincerity, whether publike or private.

e Matt. 18. 19, 20.

C

The excellent uſe of publike prayer.

1

2

3

D

Having laid downe theſe two grounds, I come now to the true meaning of the words. *When thou prayeſt*, that is, either by thy ſelfe alone, or with others, *enter into thy chamber, and when thou haſt ſhut thy doore, pray, &c.* that is, be as though thou didſt pray in thy cloſet, intending

tending onely to approve thy ſelfe, and thine heart unto the Lord, having no reſpect to any creature in the world: for this Chriſt meanes by *praying in a chamber, or cloſet*; namely, that a man in prayer ſhould not reſpect himſelfe, or any creature, but ſimply intend and approve himſelfe unto God onely.

In the words thus explaned, wee are to obſerve two things; 1. Commandement, and a reaſon thereof: the Commandement in theſe words, *When thou prayeſt enter into thy chamber, and when thou haſt ſhut the doore, pray unto thy father which is in ſecret.* This commandement in joining the right diſpoſition of the heart to Godward in our prayers, doth preſcribe the true and perfect manner of prayer, whereto that we may the better attaine, I will ſhew how the ſame is performed.

A

How to pray aright.

B

Foure things before we pray.

1

That a man in prayer may approve himſelfe and his actions unto God alone, three kinde of duties are required: ſome going before prayer, ſome in the act of prayer, and ſome after prayer.

Before prayer foure duties are required: 1. A man muſt have *knowledge* of three things concerning prayer, (for every prayer muſt be made in faith, and in obedience to God, which without knowledge cannot be done) to wit, of Gods *commandement* to pray: of the *things we aske* in prayer, and of the *manner* of asking; which is this, ſpirituall bleſſings concerning life eternall; as remiſſion of ſinnes, ſanctification, and other neceſſary graces muſt be asked ſimply without condition: but temporall things concerning this life, as health, wealth, liberty, and ſuch like muſt be asked with condition of Gods will, as they ſerve for his glory, the good of our ſelves, and of our brethren. 2. A man muſt labour to finde himſelfe converted unto God, having a true purpoſe of heart not to live in any ſin afore [a] *God be with vs ſo never*, and *David* ſaith, [b] *If I regard wickedneſſe in my heart, God will not heare my prayer.* When men come to the Lords table, they forſake their ſinnes and turne unto God: which muſt alſo be done before wee pray for therein we are to deale with God, who cannot abide iniquity. 3. A man muſt ſeeke to bee in Chriſt, that is, could pray with comfort; Joh. 15. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye ſhall what ye will, and it ſhall be done to you.* In the old Teſtament the Sacrifices were to bee offered onely upon the Altar of God, in the Tabernacle, which prefigured this mean, that in the new Teſtament, our prayers, which are our Sacrifices, muſt bee offered onely in Chriſt Jeſus, who is our *intercaſſor in heaven*, and our ſpirituall Temple. 4. Before prayer a man muſt ſever himſelfe from all creatures, in his thoughts and deſires, and bring himſelfe before God, with feare and reverence, that every power and faculty of the ſoule may ſay, as *Cornelius* did to *Peter*, *We are all here in the preſence of God*: for this end, his minde and memory muſt be taken up with divine and holy thoughts, and his heart poſſeſſed with holy deſires; God in Chriſt muſt be his whole delight, and all by-thoughts muſt be banniſhed. Our Saviour Chriſt uſed to pray in the night, and in ſolitary places apart from the ſocieties of men; this he did (no doubt) for this end, that hee might ſet himſelfe wholly before God, and be free from all occaſions of diſtraction in that divine duty.

a Iobrag 22.
b Pſal. 66. 18.

2

3

4

c Pſal. 2. 4.

C

D

Duties in prayer are eſpecially five: 1. Wee muſt labour to have a true ſenſe and feeling of our wants, of our ſinnes and corruptions, and be inwardly touched in conſcience for the ſame: for as the begger (its ſtill at home, and never goes to begge) releeſe, till hee feele himſelfe pinched with hunger and want, ſo it is with us, till wee feele our owne wants and miſeries, by reaſon of our ſinnes, wee can never put up an earneſt and hearty prayer to God. 2. Wee muſt have an inward, fervent, and unfained deſire toward God, for the ſupply of all our wants and miſeries; this is a ſpeciall thing in prayer, which maketh it not onely to be a petition of the lips, but a true requeſt of the heart. This the Prophet *David* expreſſed, when he ſaid unto God, [c] *My ſoule deſireth after thee, as the thirſty land doth after raine*: and *Hanna* alſo, when ſhe told *Eli* that *ſhe poured out her ſoule as water before the Lord*; 3. Every petition muſt be made in *obedience*, that is, wee muſt have a *commandement* injoyning us to aske the thing we pray for, and a *promiſe* to aſſure us that it ſhall bee granted unto us: and yet here this ſpeciall caveat muſt be remembred, that wee leave both the time, and the manner of accompliſhing our requeſts, to the good pleaſure and wiſdome of God. 4. Every petition muſt bee preſented to God in the [e] *name and mediation of Chriſt*: for in our ſelves we are ſinners, and [h] *our iniquities make a ſeparation betweene God and us*; ſo that wee cannot have acceſſe unto the father, ſave onely by the mediation of Jeſus Chriſt. If wee would come with boldneſſe into the holy place, it muſt be by the new and living way, which Chriſt hath prepared for us through the vaile, that is, his fleſh. 5. In prayer we muſt have *faith*, whereby we believe, that the thing wee aske ſhall be done unto us: Mark. 11. 24. *Whatſoever ye aske in prayer, believe that ye ſhall have it, and it ſhall be done unto you*: now the ground of this faith, muſt be Gods commandement and his promiſe, which I mentioned before.

Foure duties in prayer.

1

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3

4

e Pſal. 143. 6.
f 1 Sam. 1. 15.

5

e Joh. 16. 23, 24.
h Iſa. 59. 2.

The duties of *in prayer* are chiefly two: 1. Wee muſt call to remembrance the prayer wee made to God. If our man talke with a other, he will be ſo attentive, that as neere as may be, he will remember the words that paſſed between them; and much more ought we ſo to doe, when we talke with God: now wee muſt thus meditate on our prayers, for this end, that we may the better doe the thing we aske: as we crave in prayer the pardon of our ſinnes, ſo we muſt after prayer endeavour to leave the

Two duties after prayer.

practice

practice of them. What an horrible shame is it for men to beg at Gods hands the pardon of sinne, and when they rise from prayer, to fall againe to the practice of it? This is with the dog to returne to his vomit, and with the desperate theefe to stealing, after he hath intreated favour of the Judge. 2. After prayer wee must bee carefull to bee as plentifull in thanksgiving for blessings received, as wee were in petition to crave them. This indeed may bee done in the beginning of our prayer, though here I mention it last, but omitted it may not bee. Ordinary men have this humanity, that where they finde friendship, they will be more plentifull in tendring thanks, than in making new requests; and if wee deale thus with men, shall wee not much more doe it with God, with whom true thankfulnesse for one blessing, is a speciall meanes to procure many moe? Now this thankfulnesse must not be onely in word, but in deed testified by due obedience, in life and conversation: and these are the duties whereby a man shall avoid all carnall ostentation in prayer, and approve his heart unto God therein.

Use 1. Hypocrisie in prayer.

By this description of the true manner of prayer, we may learne three things; First, that the Romish Church doth neither know nor teach, nor practise the duties of prayer aright; they pray not in knowledge, for they pray in an [a] *unknowne tongue*, and allow of [b] *ignorance*, as the Mother of devotion; they commend doubting, [c] by speaking against assurance, and so pray not in faith nor obedience; they pray not in humilitie for mercy for their sinnes, for they thinke to [d] *merit* by their prayers: and which is worst of all, they direct not their prayers to God onely, in the name of Christ; but to God and his Saints, making the *virgin Mary* their Mediatresse, yea, they pray to *the wooden cresse*, which is most horrible Idolatry. Secondly, that our common people come far short of their duty in this part of Gods worship: for their prayers consist chiefly in the bare repetition of words, which is only a lip-labour: they pray without knowledge and feeling, and so must needs faile in many other duties. Now this bewraies the manifold wants that bee in the prayers of the best Christians: for besides their ignorance of many duties in prayer, their doubting and distrust, their dulnesse and deadnesse of heart, and their by-thoughts, doe all shew that their hearts are not wholly taken up with Gods glory, as they ought to be. Lastly, hereby wee may see the grosse ignorance of our common people, about spels and charmes; because they consist of good words, and many strange things are done thereby, therefore they thinke them to be good prayers: but herein they are deceived, through ignorance in the right forme of prayer: for they that make them and use them, are either graceless persons that have society with the devil, or grosly deluded through palpable ignorance: and they cannot set themselves before God to approve their hearts

a 1 Cor.14.21.

b

c

d Bellarmine de Purgatorio. Bellarmine de Sanctis. Bellarmine de Purgatorio. Bellarmine de Sanctis.

Against spells and charmes.

unto him in this action may, the worship that is done herein, is to the devill, and the cure that is wrought thereby, is his worke: for these charmes are his watch-word, to stirre him up to such exploits.

Furthermore, in this clause, *Pray unto thy Father which is in secret*, that is, an invisible God; is concealed a reason to induce men to the obedience of this Commandement, to this effect; *He to whom thou prayest, is an invisible God, therefore thou must endeavour to approve the hidden man of thy heart unto him.* Hence I gather, first, that it is an horrible thing to make an image to represent the true God, or to worship God in it; for God is invisible. The second Commandement condemneth them both, as *Moses* himselfe doth expound it, Deut. 4.15, 16. *Yee saw no image in the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, therefore corrupt not your selves by making you a graven image, or representation of any signe.* Secondly, that there should be no outward pompe in prayer, either for gesture, or for garments; for prayer is made to an invisible Father. This overthrowes the whole worship of the Popish Church, which stands in outward shewes of carnall pompe; if there bee any pompe, it must bee inward, in the graces of the heart, among which humilitie is the first ornament. Thirdly, that all places are alike, in respect of Gods presence, and of his hearing; for hee is a God in secret, whersoever a man hath occasion to pray, there God is: which confuteth them that make the Church a more holy place for prayer, than other-where, and therefore reserve all their prayers till they come thither; for now difference of place, in respect of Gods presence, is taken away: God is as well in the field, and in the private house, as in the Church: and yet Churches are ordained and used in a godly policie, because a congregation may more conveniently there meet, to their mutuall edification, in the publike exercise of the Word and prayer; otherwise private houses were as good places for Gods worship, as Churches, if they were so decent, and convenient for edification: for *in all places men may lift up pure hands unto God*, as the Apostle teacheth.

Images of God abominable.

No difference of place in regard of Gods presence.

1 Tim.2.8.

And thy father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. These words containe a two-fold reason, whereby Christ perswadeth his hearers, and in them all others, to the carefull practice of the former duty, of sincerite in prayer. The first reason is drawne from Gods *All-seeing property*: the second from his *bountie*. Gods all-seeing property is set out in these words; *and the father which seeth in secret*: that is, though the father himselfe bee invisible, yet when thou prayest in secret, that is, as though thou wert in secret, intending onely to approve thine heart unto God in prayer, then thy father seeth thee, he knowes thine heart, and heares thy prayer. This is verified by the example of *Jonas*, who was heard praying in the Whales belly:

of *Daniel*, praying in the Lyons denne, and of *Moses*, [b] who is said to *cry* unto the Lord, when as he prayed onely in heart.

b Exod.14.15.

Vses. 2

The use of this point is manifold: 1. It serveth to admonish us, that when wee pray, we must in singlenesse of heart, bring our selves into Gods presence, and heartily and truly put up our requests unto God, so as wee may approve unto him, both our hearts and our petitions: for there is nothing in our prayers that can be hid from God: and therefore we must not content our selves with the thing done, but labour so to pray, that God may be well pleased with the manner thereof.

Secondly, hereby wee are taught to make conscience, not onely of our doings and speeches, but even of our very thoughts, and that in secret places: for though we may conceale the fashe from men, yet wee cannot cover them from the eyes of God: he is invisible, and yet [c] *all things are naked before him.*

c Heb.4.13.

Prayer to Saints unlawfull.

Thirdly, this proveth that no prayer can lawfully be made to the virgin *Mary*, or to any other Saint departed; for hee alone is to be called upon in prayer, who sees in secret: but God onely sees in secret, neither the virgin *Mary*, nor any other of the Saints can see in secret; and therefore prayer is to be made to none but to God alone. The Papists answer, that Saints departed see in secret, though not of themselves, yet by God, and in God: but that is false: the Angels before their fall, saw not their owne future fall, nor the fall of man. The blessed Angels in heaven, know not now the time and day of the last judgement: yea, and the Saints departed lie under the Altar, crying, [d] *how long Lord?* being ignorant of the time of their full redemption: and therefore the Saints departed see not in secret.

Rhemon. on Luke 15. Iesu.2.

d Rev.6.9.10.

The second reason drawne from Gods promised bountie, is in these words, *shall reward thee openly*: that is, shall repay thee for thy prayer in the day of judgement, before the Saints and holy Angels, as we expounded the same words in the fourth verse. This is a notable reason to induce men to pray in a true and holy manner: wherein wee may see the endlesse mercie of God, vouchsafed to them that pray aright: if any subject put up a supplication to his earthly Prince, he takes it for a speciall favour, if the Prince vouchsafe to admit him to his presence: behold here the King of Kings will not onely vouchsafe us access unto the throne of grace, when we put up our supplications unto him, but if we pray aright, he doth hold himselfe indebted unto us for the same, and promiseth one day to reward us openly. This farre exceeds the love of all creatures in heaven and earth, no Prince is so kinde and gracious to his best subjects, as the Lord is to all that call upon him in spirit and truth.

Rhemon. ibidem. Bellarmine de Iesu. Bellarmine de Sanctis.

From this place the Papists would gather, that prayer is a worke that merits at Gods hand eternall life, for thus they reason: *Where there is repaying by way of reward, there is something done which merireth: but unto prayer there is a repaying: therefore it doth merit at Gods hand.* *Ans.* Reward is due to man two waies, either by desert, or of free gift and promise: now in this place God will reward man for his prayer, not for his desert, but of his owne free will and grace, because he hath promised so to doe. That this is so, may thus appear: If a begger should aske an alms of any man, it were absurd to say, that the begger by asking did deserve the alms: and so stands the case for the merit of our prayers; thereby we begge things at Gods hands, and therefore can no more merit thereby than the begger can deserve his alms by asking: nay rather wee may gather hence, that Gods rewarding them that pray, proceeds from his owne free grace alone; for prayer properly is a worke of man unto God, wherein may gives nothing unto God, as the Jewes did in the sacrifices, or as is done in some other spirituall sacrifices of the new Testament; but only asketh and receiveth for nothing from God, and therefore cannot hereby merit any thing at Gods hands. And by this may all other places be expounded, where reward is promised to mans works.

Lastly, note the phrase here used; *hee shall reward thee openly*: that is at the last day: whence I gather, that till the day of judgement, no servant of God shall fully reape the fruit and benefit of his prayers. This must be well considered of all that have care to call upon God unfainedly: for many times after long and earnest prayer, we feele little or no comfort, whereby we may be brought to dislike our estate, as though God had no respect unto us: but wee must know, that God doth often long deferre to reward his servants that pray unto him: no doubt but *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* prayed for issue in their younger age, and yet they were not heard till they were both old: and *David* saith, his eyes failed for waiting on God when hee would accomplish his promise made unto him: this we may also see in the petitions of the Lords prayer: for they be all according to his will, yet the full fruition of the benefits there asked, is reserved to the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

V. 7 *And when ye pray, use no vaine repetitions, as the heathen, for they thinke to be heard for their much babling.*

Against babling in prayer.

Our Saviour Christ having dealt against hypocrisie in prayer, doth here come to the second vice, which hee intends to reforme therein, namely *babling*, consisting in the outward forme of prayer. The words containe two parts, a commandement, and a reason thereof: The *commandement, When ye pray use no vaine repetitions, as the heathen doe*: where first we must

know, that Chriſt reproves not repetition in prayer ſimply, but needles repetitions only: for Pſal. 51. *David* doth ſundrie times repeat his requeſts, for the pardon of ſinne, and for ſanctification: alſo *Moſes*, *Elias*, and our Saviour Chriſt prayed fortie dayes together, and in this long prayer (no doubt) uſed many repetitions; much leſſe can we pray one day together without many repetitions. Here then by *vaine repetitions* is meant *babbling*; that is, a deſire and affectation to uſe and ſpeake many words in prayer: and under this one vice, are condemned all ſuns of the ſame kinde, that is, all ſuperfluous multiplication of words in prayer. *As the heathen*, that is, ſuch as were not [a] *the people of God*, but *aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenant of promiſe.*

[a] Epheſ. 2.12.

In this Commandement are condemned many abuſes in the manner of prayer. 1. *Meere babbling*, when words are uſed for praier, which containe neither requeſts unto God, nor giving of thanks: ſuch are many popiſh prayers, and ſuch is the uſe of the *Ave Maria*, among our common people, for it is the ſalutation of the Angell *Gabriel* to the virgin *Marie*, calling her by commiſſion from God, to be the mother of Chriſt; which words, none ſince that day, had warrant to uſe to the virgin *Marie*, only they are to be read as a part of that hiſtorie: yea, the rehearſall of the *ten Commandements*, and of the *Creed* for prayers, is but meere babbling. 2. Prayers made in *ignorance* are here condemned: thus the Popiſh ſort offend, who uſe to pray unto God in an unknowen tongue; and thus many ſin, that uſe the Lords prayer without underſtanding of the words. 3. *Cold and dull praying* is here condemned, when the lips draw neere unto God, but the heart is no whit affected therewith: this is a common vice, and ſome taint hereof may everie man finde in his owne heart. 4. *Superſtitious prayers*, when as Gods worſhip is meaſured out by ſet numbers. This is the Popiſh practice anſwerable to their doctrine, that the rehearſing of ſo many *Pater noſters*, *Aves*, *Dirges*, *Maſſes*, and ſuch like, are effectuall with God, to procure ſuch and ſuch things: this opinion takes place with our common people, for they thinke God is ſerved by the worke done; if the words bee ſaid, all is well. 5. *Raſh praying*, without due preparation, is here condemned, when men pray only on the ſudden, by the motion of the ſpirit, as they uſe to ſpeake: too many are of this mind, allowing no ſet forme of prayer to any ſort; but howſoever conceived prayer be moſt comfortable, yet without due preparation of the heart, it is moſt ſubject to vaine repetitions. 6. *Raſh vowes*, eſpecially of things not lawfull, or above our power. 7. *Raſh wiſhes*, of good or evill, being framed according to our carnall affections, and not by the word of God. And in a word, all vaine and ſuperfluous ſpeech in any manner of invocation, wherein the heart is not affected according to the will of God: all which muſt be remembred, for they ſhew plainly, that our common prayers are farre ſhort of that which the Lord requireth and alloweth.

1 Pſalm. 51.

2 Ignorant in prayer.

3 Cold in prayer.

4 Horæ Virginis Mariæ adulterium ſanctæ Eccleſiæ.

5 Raſh prayer.

6 Raſh vowes.

7 Raſh wiſhes.

How to ſpeake aright in prayer.

Here ſome will ſay, If ſo many things be diſallowed in prayer, how ſhall we ſpeake aright in prayer? *Anſw.* As the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaid of ſinging, ſo ſay I of prayer; it muſt bee [b] *with grace in our hearts*, and all our words, both for meaſure and number, muſt be tempered thereto, and no more ought to be uſed in prayer, than may ſerve to expreſſe and further in our ſelves, or others, ſome inward grace of God; as faith, repentance, zeale of Gods glorie, &c. Eccl. 5.1. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, nor let thine heart be haſtie to utter a thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou art on earth, therefore let thy words bee few*: where wee have expreſſe command, not only to prepare our hearts, but our words alſo, when wee come before God in prayer, that they be ſuch as may expreſſe ſome grace of our hearts.

[b] Col. 3.16.

As the heathen] In this inſtance wee may note, that the heathen had ſome in-ſight into matters of religion: for firſt, they knew there was a God, and that the ſame God may bee worſhipped: Secondly, they practiſed many excellent vertues of the ſecond Table; as Juſtice both in word and deed, liberalitie, continencie, fidelitie, and ſuch like: yea, they cared to doe ſome duties of the firſt Table, as here wee ſee they prayed unto God: and ſome of them performed this dutie in ſuch ſort, as they obtained hereby ſome temporall bleſſings. [c] *The heathen Marriners* that carried *Ionas* towards Tarſhiſh, *prayed unto God, and obtained ſafetie*: and *Ahab*, a wicked Idolater, [d] *humbled himſelfe unto God in prayer and faſting*, and obtained a temporall freedome from a fearefull judgement. Now the conſideration of this point, ſerves to checke many among us, who thinke that God will hold them excuſed, becauſe they meane well, and doe no man harme; they plead that they are no adulterers, theeves, nor outragious offenders: but all this the heathen man can doe, and yet he is but in a damnable caſe: for though theſe be good things, yet they will not bring any man to ſalvation: we muſt therefore get faith in Chriſt, and from thence practiſe all Chriſtian vertues.

[c] Ion. 1.14.

[d] 1 King. 21.28.

For they think to be heard by their much babbling. Theſe words are a reaſon of the former commandement, wherin we may note three opinions of the heathen concerning God. 1. They thought God was like an earthly man, who perſwaded that God ſaw them, or regarded their eſtate; and therfore thy uſed many words to acquaint him therewith. 3. They thought by the force of words to prevaile with God.

Three Opinions of the heathen concerning God.

Hence wee may learne theſe inſtructions. 1. That though the heathen knew there was a God, yet they turned him into an Idoll, when they worſhipped him; and therfore *Paul* ſaith,

[c] *they*

[a] *they were without God in the world*: for they made him like unto man, without any providence, and perſwaſible alſo by mans reaſon, and by many words.

[a] Epheſ. 2.12.

2. By theſe opinions of the heathen touching God, we may gather, that there was not alwayes in the old Teſtament, *an univerſall grace given to all*, wherby they might be ſaved, if they would: for if they had had any ſuch grace, they would never have thought ſo groſly of God as they did: one ſparke of true knowledge of the Meſſias, would have expelled all theſe carnall conceits of God out of mens hearts: and therefore howſoever the heathen had ſo much knowledge of God, as made them without excuſe, yet we are to hold, that before Chriſts comming, they were left to themſelves, and forſaken of God in his juſt judgement, in regard of his ſpeciall grace and favour.

Mens naturall conceits of God.

3. By theſe heathen wee may ſee what bee our naturall conceits of God, for our nature is the ſame with theirs: and therefore of our ſelves we thinke God to be like ſome old man, ſitting in heaven, without any regard of us at all: and when we have all things needfull we will truſt in God, but when meanes faile, we forſake him ſtraight: and this we ſhew, by uſing unlawfull meanes to helpe our ſelves in the time of diſtreſſe, as by ſeeking to witches, &c. Laſtly, naturally we thinke we can prevaile with God by our words. The Papiſts teach, that the ſaying of five words, *Nam hoc eſt corpus meum*, will turne the bread and wine in the Sacrament into the body and bloud of Chriſt: and it is the common opinion of our ignorant people, that the ſaying of words pleaſeth God: they thinke that the words of Scripture written or ſpoken, have vertue in them to doe ſtrange things, and this is one maine ground of all the practices of ſorcerie which bee ſo common among us: but we are to know, that there is no ſuch vertue in any words, it is only faith in the heart that makes Gods word effectuall for our good. Words of themſelves can doe no more but ſignifie, and that they doe not of themſelves, but by the pleaſure of men: and therefore wee are to renounce the uſe of all ſpels and charmes: for be the words never ſo good, they are but the Devils watch-word, and the ceremonies uſed therewithall, are his Sacraments to cauſe him to worke wonders. Wee therefore muſt learne by the word of God, to conceive better of God than Nature can teach us, as of an heavenly and invi ſible God, governing all creatures by his providence, and not perſwaded by mans reaſon, but working all things according to the counſell of his owne will.

Ex vi verborum: Conc. Trident. ſeſſ. 13. cap. 3.

V. 8 *Bee yee not like them therefore: for your Father knoweth whereof you have need before you aske.*

In this verſe our Saviour Chriſt reproveth the former commandement touching prayer, made after the manner of the heathen: and withall annexeth a ſecond reaſon to enforce the ſame. The commandement is repeated from the former reaſon in theſe words *Bee yee not like them therefore*: as if he ſhould ſay, conſidering that the heathen in their prayers looke to bee heard for the multitude of their words, therefore yee muſt not pray in that manner which they doe. This repetition of the commandement ſerves to imprint the ſame more deeply in the hearts of his hearers, to cauſe them, and ſo us in them, to be more carefull to avoid needleſſe repetitions in prayer.

Now having handled this commandement in the former verſe, I will here only obſerve this point of doctrine, touching the diſtinction of people before the death of Chriſt: for here Chriſt ſaith unto the Jewes, *Be yee not like them*: that is, like the Gentiles: where hee putteth a plaine difference betweene the Jewes and all the Nations of the world beſides. And therefore when he firſt ſent his Diſciples to preach, he forbade them [a] *the way of the Gentiles, and the cities of Samaria*: commanding them *to goe to the loſt ſheepe of the houſe of Iſrael*. And this diſtinction was not only in Chriſts time, but had been from the beginning, for the ſpace of 4000. yeares. In the firſt age of the world there were [b] *the ſonnes of God*, and the *daughters of men*: after the floud, the [c] *children of the fleſh*, and *the children of the promiſe*. And under the Law, a [d] *people of God*, and *no people*. This diſtinction ſtood in two things. 1. In regard of the grace of adoption, and of the eſpeciall favour of God; for in this Text Chriſt ſaith, the *Jewes had God for their Father*, which the *Gentiles had not*, for they were *ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe*, Epheſ. 2. 12. 2. In regard of Gods true worſhip: for concerning prayer, a ſpeciall part thereof, Chriſt here ſaith to the Jewes, *Yee ſhall not be like the Gentiles*: If any ſhall here thinke that this preferment of the Jewes before the Gentiles, in regard of Gods ſpeciall mercie came from this, that God foreſaw ſomething in them, which was not in the Gentiles, let them heare what *Moſes* ſaith to the Jewes: [e] *The Lord did not ſet his love upon you, nor choſe you for your multitude, but becauſe the Lord loved you, and would keepe the oath which he ſware to your fathers.*

[a] Matth. 10.5, 6.

[b] Gen. 6.2.

[c] Gal. 4.29.

[d] Hoſ. 1.10.

[e] Deut. 7.7, 8.

Diſtinction of people before Chriſts death.

The promiſe of life not univerſall to all.

From this ground of doctrine touching the diſtinction of people, in regard of Gods ſpeciall mercie, follow three weightie points to bee knowen and beleeved: Firſt, that the promiſe of remiſſion of ſinnes, and life everlaſting in the *Meſſias*, is not univerſall to all, but indefinite to many of all ſorts, kindes, and eſtates: for if the promiſe pertained to all, then there could be no diſtinction of man and man, of people and people, in regard of mercie: and therefore the opinion of univerſall grace is falſe and erroneous. Secondly, that though Chriſt

Against universall redemption.

died for all, (for so the Scripture saith) yet hee died not alike effectually for all: for if Redemption by Christ had beene universall, then had mercie belonged alike to all, which is against the Text, and therefore the opinion of universall redemption is also a forgery of mans braine.

Against universall vocation.

Thirdly, that God calls not all men effectually to salvation by Christ, for then should every one have God to be his Father in Christ: and the Jew had no privilege before the Gentile, in regard of mercy, and the grace of adoption: but here we see, that God for many hundreds of yeares, was the Father of the Jew, and not of the Gentile, in regard of grace and adoption. And by this doctrine wee may cleare that place of the Apostle Saint *Paul*, 1 Tim. 2. 4. where he saith, *God would have all to be saved:* for he meaneth not all men in all times, but in this last age of the world, after the ascension of Christ, when as the partition wall was broken downe, and the distinction betweene Jew and Gentile taken away, in regard of mercy and the grace of adoption.

For your Father knoweth whereof yee have need, before yee aske of him.

These words are a second reason against the heathenish manner of prayer, to this effect; It is needlesse for you to use vaine repetitions in your prayers, because God knowes your wants before you pray: and therefore few words well ordered are sufficient.

A rule in expounding Scripture.

The exposition. *Your Father knoweth*] This knowledge of God, is not a bare notice taken of our wants, but such a knowledge as doth withall include a speciall care to make supply unto them: for this is a rule in the expounding of Scripture, that *words of knowledge are oftentimes put for words of affection*: as Psal. 1. 6. *The Lord* knoweth *the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish:* where the opposition of knowledge to destruction, sheweth plainly, that by knowledge there is meant, *the Lords due regard and respect* unto the wayes of the godly: which is a point full of all comfort to the children of God: and for the clearing of it, three questions are to be scanned, which may well be moved out of this Text:

Why we pray, seeing God knowes our wants.

1. *Quest.* If God know our wants before we pray, why then should we pray at all? *Ans.* We pray, not to informe God of the things we want, as though he knew them not; but for other causes: as 1. to stirre up our hearts, to seeke unto Gods presence and favour: 2. to exercise our faith in the meditation of Gods promises: 3. to ease our wofull hearts, by powring them out unto the Lord: 4. to testifie our obedience unto Gods commandements, and our trust in his providence, for the receiving of every good thing we desire.

2. *Quest.* If God know our wants, and have care to make supply thereof, why then doth God oftimes delay to grant the prayers of his servants? *Answ.* God deferreth to grant the request of his children for many respects, tending to their great good: as 1. thereby to kindle their faith, and to stirre up their zeale in prayer, that they may more earnestly begge the things they want: for this end our Saviour Christ reasoned with the woman of Canaan, before hee would cure her daughter: 2. to keepe them in humility, and to prevent spiritu-all pride: thus hee deferred to remove from the Apostle *Paul*, the *buffeting of Satan*, though he prayed for it, *lest he should be puffed up through multitude of revelations*, 2 Corin. 12. 7, 8, 9. 3. to make them esteeme more highly of the blessings of God, and to stirre them up to more thankfulnesse for the same: for it is commonly true, that things lightly gotten, are lightly set by.

Why God never grants some mens requests.

3. *Quest.* How falleth it out, that God doth never grant some men their requests? *Ans.* 1. Because they make their prayers, but not according to Gods will, either failing in the time, as did the foolish virgins, who cryed, *Lord, Lord, open to us, when the doores were shut*, Mat. 25. 11, 12. or in the things they aske, and so the 2 *sonnes of Zebede* had not their request, because *they asked they knew not what*. 2. Because they *doubt and waver in prayer*, for such shall not receive any thing of the Lord, Jam. 1. 6, 7. 3. Because they pray for wrong ends; *Yee aske and receive not, because yee aske amisse, that you might consume it on your lusts*, Jam. 4. 5.

Christian behaviour in distresse.

The Vse. First, this provident eye of God over all our wants, teacheth us what to do when we are assaulted by any enemy, either of body or soule: we must first of all make God our refuge and tower of defence, by getting assurance of our adoption: for if we be Gods children, he is our father, knowing, and weighing our wants, and he is most carefull to make supply thereto, before we pray, Genes. 25. 22. when the two twinnes strove together in *Rebecca's* wombe, she sent to aske the Lord thereof, no doubt by *Isaac* her husband, who before had prayed for her, v. 21. So when *Iehosaphat* was beset with many enemies, *he cried unto the Lord for helpe, and was delivered*, 2 Chr. 18. 31. and chap. 20. 12. And it was the Prophet *Davids* practice to have recourse to God in all his troubles, for which cause he calls the Lord *his rocke, his resting and hiding place*.

A ground of consolation.

Secondly, hereby wee are taught to have a moderate care for the things of this life: for we have a Father in heaven, who careth for us, knowing all our wants, and ready to make supply thereof before we pray. In these dayes, most men set their hearts upon the world, and trust to outward meanes more than to God himselfe, which comes from this; because they want a true persuasion of their adoption in Christ: for if they knew that God were their Father, then surely this persuasion would take place in their

their hearts; *God knowes my wants, and is carefull for the supply thereof, and therefore I will trust in him, and obey him.*

Christian behaviour in affliction.

Thirdly, this teacheth us, in any necessity or affliction, to subject our selves to the will of God, labouring to be thankfull for that estate, as well as for prosperity, and studying to please and honour God therein: for he is a father who seeth all our wants before we complaine, and is carefull for our good, knowing that affliction is better for us than prosperity, or else he would send us deliverance: for it is all one with him, and hee delights not in the affliction of his people.

Fourthly, this serves to arme us against all carnall and slavish feare, whereby mens hearts are oppressed, either in regard of death, or of the day of judgement: for though the devill rage against us, yet when death commeth, God is our father, who knoweth our wants, and the way to comfort us, and is both willing and able to save us. In a word, this meditation serveth to stir us up to all dutifull obedience in the whole course of our lives: for who can be but thankfull to such a father, as knowes all his wants, and as he is able, so also he is willing and ready to make supply thereto: this therefore should enlarge our hearts to blesse God, that is such a father unto us in Christ.

v. 9 *After this manner therefore pray yee: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.*

Our Saviour Christ having forbidden his Disciples all carnall and superstitious kinde of praying, doth here prescribe unto them a most holy forme of true prayer: but before we come unto it, hee gives them this commandement, *After this manner therefore pray yee:* S. *Luke* hath it thus; *When you pray, say, Our Father, &c.* in which words Christ injoynes his Disciples to use a right and holy forme of prayer, the patterne whereof is after set downe. Now because this point is controversall, I will briefly set downe, how farre forth this prayer of Christ is prescribed unto us; to wit, for matter and forme we must imitate and follow it in all our prayers, but wee are not tied to the very words of this prayer, but may freely use them, or other words at our pleasure: for our Saviour Christ oftimes prayed in other words, and so did the Apostles, as we may see by *Pauls prayers* in his Epistles, wherein he observeth the matter and manner of this prayer, but yet useth other words: yea, S. *Luke* setting downe this very forme of prayer, doth some what alter from the words of Saint *Matthew*.

How farre forth the Lords prayer is prescribed.

Of a set forme of prayer.

Upon this commandement it may well bee demanded, whether it be profitable and necessary to use a set forme of prayer, either privately or publikely in the service of God? *Answ.* I take a set forme of prayer, either publikely or privately, to be both profitable and necessarie; *set* (I say) both for the matter and manner, and if need require, for the very words also: my reasons are these: *I.* That which God hath ordained, is both profitable and necessarie: but God hath ordained that men should use set formes of prayer: for the Priests were injoyned a set forme of prayer in blessing the people, Numb. 6. 23, 24. and the 92. Psal. is a set prayer for the Sabbath day: yea, all the Psalmes of David, (some few Psalmes of doctrine onely excepted) are set formes of prayers to bee used of the Church of God for ever: and in this place, Christ prescribes a set forme of prayer, not only for the matter and manner, but also for the words: and the like did *Iohn Baptist*, when hee taught his disciples to pray. *II. Reason.* In man there be sundry wants in prayer, as ignorance in the understanding, distractions in the minde, oblivion in the memory both of Gods commandement and promises; in the heart is much deadnesse, dulnesse, and distrust; in the tongue many times, is want of such convenient utterance as should be in him that would speak unto God; and in most men there is that bashfulnesse, that they cannot utter and dispose the desires of their heart before others in that order which were meet. Now to make supply of all these wants, a set forme of prayer is to be used, whereunto all the powers of body and soule may be well fitted. *III. Reason.* The ancient Church of God, long before the time of Popery, used a set forme of prayer: indeed for the first three hundred yeares after Christ, by reason of continuall persecution, they could not doe so: but after those times, there was a set forme of prayer used in all Churches, insomuch as the souldiers in the field had their set prayers. And in many Councels it was decreed, that no Church should use any forme of prayer, but such as was allowed and appointed, and that for these causes: first, that there might be an uniformity in the solemne worship of God: and secondly, that the ignorance and negligence of many Pastors might be prevented, who otherwise would have omitted this duty in their congregation: and therefore there was then set downe a generall forme of Confession of faith, of prayer, and thanksgiving, and of administration of the Sacraments.

Reason for it. 1

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Now considering set prayer is Gods ordinance, and the imperfections of man require it, and the same hath beene so long used in former ages, I doubt not to affirme the same to bee both profitable and necessarie: whereby we may see how blinde and rash they are, who terme set prayer an *abhominable Idol*, and as loathsome unto God, as swines flesh was to the Jewes. These be loathsome and unreverent termes: but that we may know their errour and folly the better, let us here scanne their principall Reasons against set prayer; and they

Borrow and Greenwoods sermon p. 48.

they be two: I. To read a ſermon penned by an other, is no preaching, and therefore to repeat a ſet prayer is no prayer. *Anſw.* The reaſon is naught; for in reading a penned Sermon, a man cannot expreſſe the gift of prophecie; but in reading a ſet prayer he may ſhew the gift of prayer; as namely, a touched heart for his ſinne, an hungring deſire after grace, and a thankful heart for Gods mercies; and herein doth prayer conſiſt, and not in words. *II. Reaſon.* We muſt pray freely as the Spirit moves us; and therefore to uſe ſet formes of prayer, is to ſtint and quench the good motions of the Spirit. *Anſwer.* This reaſon were ſomewhat, if every one received ſuch a portion and meaſure of the Spirit as did inable him hereunto: but ſeeing in this life we have but the *firſt fruits thereof*, and not the *tenths* (as one ſaith;) we are to uſe al good helps to make ſupply unto our wants: for in the practice of holy duties, we are like unto a man that is newly recovered of ſome grievous ſicknesſe, who can walke in his chamber, yet not by himſelfe alone, but either with his ſtaffe, or leaning upon another mans ſhoulder: even ſo we being weake and feeble in prayer, had need of the helpe of ſet formes of praier, to hold up our feeble hands unto God: and therefore it is requiſite for men to uſe ſet formes of prayer, at leaſt for the matter and order thereof in their owne hearts; yea, and many times it is needfull for ſome to uſe ſet prayers for words: for many that have true grace in their hearts, want utterance to expreſſe it: and if they might not uſe ſet forms of prayer, they ſhould be deprived of many great comforts, eſpecially when they pray with others. So that if the heart be rightly prepared thereto, ſet prayer doth not quench, but helpe the weake gifts of the Spirit both in the heart and tongue.

By this then we ſee, that neither our Church, nor any other, where a ſet forme of divine ſervice is eſtabliſhed, is therefore to bee blamed; becauſe the ſame is both neceſſary and profitable. Secondly, here we ſee, that it is meet and neceſſary wee ſhould have ſome ſet forme of prayer in our hearts according to our peculiar eſtates, whereby wee may expreſſe unto God our peculiar wants, and crave ſupply thereof particularly: ſome thinke we muſt onely pray upon extraordinary inſtinct and motion of the Spirit: but ſo many be our wants, that unleſſe we prepare our ſelves before-hand, we cannot pray aright: and therefore to avoyd many diſtractions and lets in our minde, heart, and utterance, it ſhall be found needfull to preſcribe unto our ſelves a ſet forme of prayer: wee are content to keepe a ſet order for our diet and apparell, and why ſhould we not doe it in prayer, which concerneth the comfort and refreſhing of our ſoules.

The Lords prayer ought to be ſet in new forme.

A ſecond thing to be gathered from this commandement is this; That the Lords prayer is the moſt excellent forme of prayer that is, or can be made by any creature: for it was indited and propounded by the Sonne of God, who is the wiſdome of the Father. Now the excellency of it ſtands in theſe things: I. in the pithy ſhortneſſe of it: for in few words it compriſeth endleſſe matter: II. in the perfection of it: for it containeth in it whatſoever is to bee asked in prayer: in which reſpect it is well called of one, the *abridgement of the whole Goſpell*: III. in the order thereof, which hereafter we ſhall ſee: in the reſolution of it: IV. in the acceptation it hath with God the Father: for it containeth the words of Chriſt his Sonne, in whom the Father is well pleaſed.

Uſe. 1. The excellency of this prayer ſheweth plainely, that if any ſet forme of prayer may be uſed, then this may, being indited by the Mediator of the Church. And therefore the Anabaptiſts of our dayes are ſoonly deceived, who deny the uſe hereof for a prayer, when as before this time, for the ſpace of ſixteene hundred yeares after Chriſt, there was never any that diſallowed it. Secondly, here we ſee that the practice of thoſe Preachers is commendable, who uſe to conclude their prayers with the Lords prayer: for hereby, as by a moſt perfect and excellent prayer, the wants and imperfections of our prayers are ſupplied. Thirdly, whereas ſome would gather from the perfection and excellency of this prayer, that it alone is ſufficient to be uſed, they are deceived: for Chriſts intent was rather to commend this prayer unto us for matter and manner, than for the words thereof. Againe, though it bee a moſt perfect prayer, yet it is onely generall: but every true beleever muſt have particular prayers, whereby in ſpeciall forme and manner his particular eſtate and condition may be made knowne unto the Lord; yet ſo, as they bee alwayes ſuitable unto this forme here preſcribed. And thus much of the Commandement: Now followeth the prayer itſelf.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, &c.

This Prayer hath three parts: I. a *preface*: II. the *petitions*: III. the *concluſion*. The *Preface* in theſe words: *Our Father which art in heaven*. In the handling whereof, as alſo in the reſt of this prayer, I will firſt propound the *Meaning*, then the *Inſtructions*.

I. The Meaning. Our Father] This title *Father*, properly belongs to God, who is a Father ſimply, by creation giving being to all things, and preſerving them by his providence. Men indeed are called fathers, but that is onely ſecondarily, becauſe in ſome properties of fatherhood they reſemble God. Now this title is given to God, ſometime ſimply conſidered without perſonall relation; as Deut. 32.6. *Do ye ſo reward the Lord, O fooliſh people? is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?* Other-while it is given to the particular perſons in Trinity; as firſt and principally to the firſt perſon, who is com-

Matth. 6. verſ. 9.

1
2
Mediation Euangelicall.
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commonly called the *Father*. And the ſecond perſon in Trinitie is ſometime called *Father*, as Iſa. 9.6. *the Father of Eternitie*: becauſe hee is the ground of our adoption, whereby we become eternally the ſonnes of God: and therefor hee is brought in thus complaining of reproach: *Behold, I and the children which the Lord hath given me, are as ſignes and wonders in Iſrael*; For the Author to the Hebrewes expounds that place of Chriſt, Heb. 2. 13. and he is ſaid *to have ſeed*, Iſa. 53. 10. And the Holy Ghoſt may proportionally be called *Father*, becauſe with the Father and the Sonne hee gives being to all things. But in this place by *Father*, is meant properly the firſt perſon, who is firſt and chiefly the *Father* of Chriſt; and in Chriſt our *Father*. He is the *Father of Chriſt*, firſt by nature, begetting him as he is the Sonne, of his owne ſubſtance before all worlds, by communicating unto him his whole Eſſence or Godhead. Secondly, hee is the Father of Chriſt, as Chriſt is man, by the grace of perſonall union: for the manhood of Chriſt doth wholly ſubſiſt in the Godhead of the ſecond perſon, and therefore Chriſt as he is man, I ſay not his manhood, which is a nature, not a perſon) may well bee called the Sonne of God. And in this relation of himſelfe to the firſt perſon, Chriſt ſaith, *My Father is greater than I*, Joh. 14. 28. God the Father is our father, not by nature, or in regard of perſonall union, but by the *grace of Adoption in Chriſt*: for *God ſent his Sonne made of a woman* (that is, incarnate) *that wee might receive the adoption of ſonnes*. And this grace wee receive, when wee *truly beleeve in his name*, Joh. 3. 12. and Gal. 3. 26. God for Chriſts ſake being content to receive us for his ſonnes and daughters.

Iſa. 8. 18.

Gal. 4. 4. 5.

Which art in heaven] God is ſaid to bee *in heaven*, not as though hee were included in the circle of the heavens: *For the heavens, and the heaven of heavens are not able to containe him*, 1 King. 8. 27. and indeed hee is neither included nor excluded any place, being infinite, and ſo everie where; but becauſe his majeſtie and glorie is moſt eminent in the higheſt heavens to his Saints and Angels: and thence doth he manifeſt himſelfe unto us in his power, wiſdome, juſtice, and mercie, while we are on earth: for *Heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footſtoole*, Iſa. 66. 1. So that the meaning of this preface is this; *O Lord God, thou art the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and in him our moſt merciful Father by adoption and grace, thou art a moſt glorious God, who dwelſt in heaven and from heaven manifeſt thy glorious power, and mercie, thy wiſdome, juſtice, &c.*

2. The Inſtructions.

Two things wee muſt pray for.

I. This title *Father*, here given to God, teacheth us to whom we muſt direct our prayers: not to Saints or Angels, or any other creatures, but to God alone. *Reaſons.* I. This is a perfect patterne of true prayer, wanting no direction for the right performance of this part of Gods worſhip: now this directs us to pray unto God in prayer. II. God only is the Author and Giver of all good things, Jam. 1. 16. and therefore we muſt aske them of him alone. III. The Lord only who is infinite and omnipotent, can heare all mens prayers at all times, and in all places: and therefore hee alone is to be prayed unto, and not Saints departed, as the Papiſts teach.

The order of prayer to God.

II. By this title wee may ſee, in what order we muſt direct our prayers unto God: for as the word of God reveaſleth God unto us, ſo muſt we pray unto him: now the Scripture reveaſleth God unto us, to bee one in eſſence and three in perſon, *viz.* the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghoſt; whereof the Father is firſt, the Sonne is the ſecond, the Holy Ghoſt the third in order, though not in time or greatneſſe. Thus and no other ways muſt wee conceive of God, neither ſevering the Godhead from the perſons, nor the perſons from the Godhead. And thus alſo muſt we worſhip him, even one God in three perſons, and three perſons in one God. And yet ſeeing the Father is firſt in order, the Sonne the ſecond, and the Holy Ghoſt the third, therefore when wee pray to God, wee muſt obſerve this order, directing our prayers to God the Father, in the mediation of the Sonne, by the aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, as Chriſt here teacheth us to ſay, *Our Father.*

Queſt. May we not direct our prayers to the *Sonne*, or to the *Holy Ghoſt* by name? *Anſ.* Yes: for *Stephen* prayed to the Sonne, Acts 7. 59. *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*: and Chriſt bids his Diſciples, *Goe teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghoſt*: that is, calling upon the name of the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghoſt: *Object.* But in this perfect platforme, we are taught to pray to the Father alone. *Anſw.* Though the Father alone be here named, yet the other two perſons are not hereby excluded: the Father indeed is moſt uſually named, becauſe hee is the firſt in order, but yet with him alwayes is implyed the Sonne, and the Holy Ghoſt: for as all the three perſons ſubſiſt in one and the ſame divine nature or Godhead, and are not ſevered in will, in counſell, or in outward actions, as creation, preſervation, and redemption, ſave only that they are diſtinguiſhed in the manner of working; ſo likewiſe muſt they be all conceived in our minides together when wee pray, and none ſevered out though they be not named: we muſt pray to all, though wee name but one, having in that one relation to the reſt in our minde and heart. And if we conceive aright of the order of the perſons in Trinitie, ſubſiſting in the unitie of eſſence, wee may fitly name in our prayers which perſon we will, for that withall we include the reſt in our minde, and may alſo (if we name all) place them in ſuch order as beſt fitteth our preſent occaſion: as the Apoſtle doth in his benediction, 2 Cor. 13. 13. *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God*

Matth. 28. 19.

God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen: where he placeth the second before the first, because by the grace of Christ we come to be partakers of the love of God the Father.

III. In this title *Father*, see the true ground of that boldnesse wherewith Gods children come before God in prayer; namely, their interest in the covenant of grace in Christ, in whom God becomes their Father. The Scripture mentioneth two covenants: one of works, which saith, *Doe this, and thou shalt live*: the other of grace, concerning reconciliation by the *Messiu* through faith: for it saith, *Beleeve in the Lord Iesus, and thou shalt be saved.* Now the covenant of works through the corruption of our flesh, drives us from God, and throwes us to hell: but the covenant of grace shewes our reconciliation to God in Christ: *for* [a] *God was in Christ, and reconciled the world unto himselfe, not imputing their sinnes unto them*: for which the first covenant would have condemned them. And when wee truly beleeve in Christ, wee perfoime the condition of this covenant, and so *through* [b] *faith in him have peace with God*: yea, [c] *boldnesse, and entrance with confidence.* And therefore when wee come to God in prayer, we must ground upon this covenant in Christ, and so shall wee goe boldly unto the throne of grace: bring faith in Christ, then is God thy Father, and so thou shalt bee welcome: Hence it was that the Prophets and holy men under the Law doe so often intreat the Lord in their prayers, to remember his covenant made with *Abraham, Isaac*, and *Iacob*, which was the covenant of grace; as the Apostle sheweth, Gal.3. and Rom.4.

IV. In this title *Father*, we are taught how to dispose our selves towards God when wee pray unto him; namely, as children towards their father, for our whole behaviour both outward and inward. And this stands especially in foure things: *I.* In due reverence both of heart and gesture, like as gracious children come before their awfull parents: *II.* In true humilitie, from our hearts renouncing our owne merits, and our owne wills, and relying wholly on Christs righteousnes, and on the will of God in him: *III.* In true contrition and sorrow of heart for our owne sinnes, wherby we have offended God, who hath beene so gracious and merciffull a Father unto us in Christ: *IV.* In a sound purpose of heart to breake off the course of all sinne, and to walke before God in new obedience to all his Commandements. This is such behaviour as beseemeth Gods children in prayer; and hereunto must wee labour to conforme our selves when wee come before God, or else we shew our selves not children, but Rebels and Traytors: beware therefore of all unreverent behaviour in prayer; beware of pride, of hardnes and wickednesse of heart, as having the least purpose to live in sinne: for as *David* saith, *If I regard wickednesse in my heart, God will not heare my prayer*: but (saith he) *I will wash my hands in innocencie, and so will I compasse thine altar: with a contrite and broken heart*, Psal.51.17. disclaiming his owne righteousnesse, v. 1. and Psal.115.1. and in all reverence of behaviour, Psal.95.9.

Thus much of the title *Father*. Now let us see how we must apply it to our selves in prayer: *Our Father*, that is, my Father in Christ, and not mine only, but the Father of all that truly beleeve in him.

Hence we learne sundrie instructions:

I. That when wee pray, wee must apply to our selves all the promises of God in Christ, touching righteousnes and life everlasting: for he that makes them is our Father, and therefore they belong to us that bee his children. These promises are many and excellent. And that they must be applyed to our selves in prayer, is granted on all parts; but how, there is the controversie. The Papists say, we must apply them to our selves by hope; we say, by faith, which is the ground of things hoped for, laying hold on them for our selves particularly, as *Thomas* did on Christ, [a] *My God, and my Lord*: which I prove thus: Whatsoever we aske in prayer, we must [b] *beleeve that God will grant it for his Sonnes sake*: but this we cannot doe, unlesse wee beleeve that God is our Father in Christ, and Christ our Redeemer: and therefore wee must first by faith lay hold upon the maine promises of righteousnesse and life everlasting in Christ, which is the ground of all other blessings we receive from God. O (will some say) this is hard to doe. *Also*. Yet wee must doe our endevour herein, and strive against doubting, using the meanes whereby wee may come to that measure of grace, to say with *Paul*; *I live now by faith in the Sonne of God, who hath loved me, and given himselfe for me*; doing this in sincerities, God accepts the will for the deed, even our desire and endevour to apply Christ and his benefits, for application is selfe. And if we continue in this use of meanes, he that hath begun in us this good desire, will finish it in the fruition of grace and full assurance.

II. This teacheth us when we pray, to bee mindfull of Gods whole militant Church and people: for we must say, *Our Father*. Indeed it is not unlawfull to apply this title in prayer to our selves particularly, for God saith of every one that truly beleeveth, *Thou shalt call me my Father*, Jer.3.19. and so did [c] Christ and his Apostles apply to themselves this title in their prayers. But yet Christ would have us alwayes to pray for our brethren, being assured from this his direction, that they likewise pray for us. This was *Davids* usuall practice, no doubt: for when hee prayed [e] most earnestly for the pardon of his owne personall sinnes, he then forgets not Zion, but prayes the [f] *Lord to doe well unto it, and to build the walls of Ierusalem.* Now if in everie prayer wee make, wee must have respect to the Church of God; then undoub-

Where we have boldnesse with God in prayer.

a 2 Cor.5.19.

b Rom.5.1.
c Ephes.3.12.

Psal.66.18.

Matth.6. vers.9.

Psal.26.6.

Applying of Gods promises to our selves.

a Joh.20.28.

b Mark.11.24. Iam.1.6.

How to dispose our selves towards God in prayer.

Gal.2.20.

We must pray for others.

c Matth.26.39.
d 2 Cor.12.18.

e Psal.51.1.

f Vers.18.

undoubtedly in the course of our lives we must imploy our selves to seeke the good of others, especially of Gods Church: for our conversation must express the truth of our devotion. Everie one will say, this is the Ministers dutie: which is most true; but yet it is not his only: for as in the naturall body everie member imployes it selfe for the good of the whole body, so must it be in the mysticall body of Christ: for the meanest Christian hath some gift of the Spirit; and *the manifestation of the Spirit* (wheresoever it is) *is given to profit withall.* The common saying is, Everie man for himselfe, and God for us all: but this is a graceless saying, flat against the communion of Saints, wherein everie one seekes anothers good.

III. Hence we learne, how wee must come affected towards our brethren when wee pray to God, namely, lovingly and peaceably, as to children of the same Father: when we come to the Lords Table, wee make conscience of love and amitie with all men; and so should we doe in prayer, for therein we bring a spirituall sacrifice unto God, and therefore we must bee [a] *reconciled to our brethren* when wee offer it: for when mens hearts bee full of malice, or *their hands full of blood*, [b] *God will not heare them, though they make many prayers.* If therefore wee call upon God as on our Father, wee must be sure to love his children as our brethren: for [c] *this commandement wee have of God, that hee which loveth God, should love his brother also: and he is not of God, that loveth not his brother*, 1 Joh.3.10.

IIII. Here wee see that all true beleevers, whether high or low, poore or rich, are in an equall condition in regard of God: for God is no respecter of persons: and here Christ teacheth everie one to say, *Our Father*. In earthly Kingdomes there bee differences of estates and degrees: some be noble, some bee base; some rule, others serve and obey; but *with God in Christ there is neither bond nor free, &c.* Col. 3.11. The beleeving shepherd may call God his Father, as well as the beleeving King, and have as good a place in Christs Kingdome. Which serves notably both to encourage the poore to embrace the Gospell in sincerities, seeing their meane outward estate can nothing prejudice or hinder their high acceptance with the Lord, if they be faithfull: as also to admonish the rich and noble in this world, not to bee puffed up with these outward things to contemne the poore: for these things give them no title to the Kingdome of God: nay, [b] *not many noble, not many mighty after the flesh are called: but God hath chosen the poore of this world, that they should be rich in faith*, Jam.2.5.

Which art in heaven] These words shew towards what place we must dispose our selves in prayer: our Father to whom wee pray *is in heaven*, and therefore thither must wee direct our hearts, our eyes, our hands, and all that is in us. Indeed the Jewes under the Law looked towards the Temple, and in the Temple towards the Mercie-seat, because the Lord had there promised the manifestation of his presence: and therefore [c] *Daniel* turned his face towards Jerusalem when hee prayed in Chaldea: but now in the new Testament difference of place in respect of Gods presence, is taken away, and we are not tied in prayer to looke East or West, North or South, but men may now everie where, and everie way lift up pure hearts and hands unto God; towards heaven thou must dispose thy heart, because thy Father to whom thou prayest is there: and look which way thou wilt, or goe whither thou wilt, heaven is not neerer nor further off. Which shewes evidently two notable and grosse Popish fooleries in the matter of Gods worship: the first is, their *going on pilgrimage* from place to place to serve God the better: for God whom thou must worship is in heaven; in respect whereof all places are alike, goe whither thou wilt thou art not neerer, and stirre no foot, thou art not further off. Their second fooleric, which is also abominable before God, *is to worship God in an Image, at Crosses, and in Crucifixes, &c.* These they use to put them in minde of God, and of Christ; but this they learne by the precepts and traditions of men, and therefore it is but meere vaine and foolish worship in the sight of God: Christ teacheth us to set our hearts towards heaven, and not to pore on dumbe Images here on earth.

II. Instruct. Is God in heaven; then when we pray we must come before God with all reverence, feare and trembling; for he is in heaven a most glorious God, full of all majestie and power: Eccles.5.1. *Be not rash with thy mouth, nor let thine heart be hastie to utter a word before God*: why so? *for he is in heaven, and thou art upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* Now this reverence must shew it selfe, first, in the holy disposition of the heart and affections towards the Lord, when the minde is not carried away with by-thoughts, but applyeth it selfe wholly and only to the present service it hath in hand: secondly, in the comely gesture of the body beseeming so holy an action, done to so high a majestie: thirdly, in the humble and reverent uttering of our requests, having before-hand well considered the things wee are to utter before God. But goes the case thus with men in their ordinarie prayers? nothing lesse; for beside the multitude that pray without understanding, even the better sort in the time of prayer, have their mindes running upon other matters, some about their profits, others about their sports; or such like: now is not this Pharisaicall prayer, wherein the lips draw neere to God, but the heart is farre removed? Against, many shew no reverence in gesture or in speech; some disdaine to bow to God in prayer, and others doe rush upon God in many words without premeditation: But all these sinne grievously: for howsoever unreve-

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2 Cor.12.7.

Brotherly love needfull in prayer.

a Matth.5.23.

b Isa.1.15.

c 1 Joh.4.21.

Fatherhood in God is equall towards all true beleevers.

b 1 Cor.1.26.

c Dan.6.10.

Two popish fooleries.

Reverence requisite in prayer.

How it must be shewed.

rent praying troubles few mens conſcience, becauſe it is not eaſily diſcerned, being againſt the firſt table: yet it is to be eſteemed as a diſgrace unto the Almightie: and being careleſly practiſed, when it is once knowen, it is plaine mockerie of Gods Majeſtie, worſer than mocking of father or mother: and therefore we muſt with all careſulneſſe avoid it, and ſet our hearts with all reverence towards God in prayer.

Where we muſt lift out Godin prayer.

III. Hence we muſt learne to aske of God in prayer heavenly things eſpecially: theſe earthly bleſſings may be asked, ſo farre forth as they are helpes to further us towards our everlaſting inheritance in heaven, to which we are called, 1 Pet.1.3,4. But to be ever groveling in the earth, is againſt the nature of him that hath a father in heaven.

Our aff. ction ſhould be heaven.

IIII. Our principall care muſt bee how to come to heaven, for there our father is: ordinarily a childe deſires to be with his father, and is beſt pleaſed on his mothers lap, or in his fathers armes; herein therefore we muſt teſtifie our ſelves to bee the ſonnes and daughters of God, by our unfained deſire to bee in heaven where our father is. It is unnaturall for a childe not to be delighted with his fathers houſe; and ſo it argues them to be void of grace, that have no affection towards heaven and heavenly things: let us therefore delight to pray, whereby we may creepe into our fathers boſome, and though our bodies be on earth, yet in affection and deſire let our ſoules mount up to heaven: here we are but pilgrims, if God be our Father, our hearts muſt bee upon our home which is heaven where our Father is.

A double prop to our prayers.

Now the words of this preface thus opened, containe a two-fold notable ground and prop to all our prayers: to wit, that God is both *able* and *willing* to heare and helpe when we pray: for his being *in heaven*, imports that he is Almightie, and therefore can heare and helpe us: *Our God is in heaven, and he doth whatſoever he will.* And being a *Father*, yea, our Father in Chriſt: he muſt needs be willing and ready to grant our requeſts: for no father is ſo tenderly affected towards his naturall ſonne, as the Lord our God is towards all his children in Chriſt: Pſal. 103.13. *As a father hath compaſſion on his children, ſo hath the Lord compaſſion on all that call upon him:* Luk.11.13. *If you that bee evill can give good things to your children, much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghoſt to them that aske him:* And hence it is that Chriſt ſaith, *Whatſoever you aske the Father in my name, he will give it you,* Joh. 16.23. Of theſe two muſt everie one be perſwaded that prayes aright: everie one will grant that God is able to heare and helpe; but of his willingneſſe thereunto none can be aſſured, but hee that is the childe of God, who knoweth God to be his Father. Yet here muſt none deceive himſelfe, to thinke whatſoever hee askes on his owne head, God will grant it: for if we aske amiſſe we ſhall not receive; and therefore

A wee muſt carefully marke and obſerve the direction of Gods word, both for the things wee aske, and for our manner of asking.

Hallowed be thy name.

Thus much of the preface: here begin the petitions, which are ſix in number; whereof the three firſt concerne God, the three latter concerne our ſelves. Againe, of thoſe which concerne God, the firſt concernes Gods glorie in ſelfe, the other two the meanes whereby Gods glorie is manifeſted and inlarged among men: for *Gods name is then glorified among men, when his kingdome doth come, and his will is done.*

B Now this petition for the glorifying of Gods name, is rightly ſet in the firſt place: for Gods glorie is the abſolute end of all things: Prov. 16.4. *The Lord made all things for his owne ſake, yea even the wicked for the day of evill:* and therefore it muſt be preferred before all things: before life it ſelfe, yea before ſalvation, which is life eternall: Joh.12.27,28. our Saviour Chriſt preferres the glorie of his fathers name, before his owne life. And *Paul* preferres it afore his owne ſalvation: for he profeſſeth that for Gods glorie in the ſalvation of the Jewes, *hee could wiſh himſelfe ſeparate from Chriſt*, Rom.9.3.

In this petition, as in the reſt, we are to obſerve this order: firſt, ſhew the meaning of the words; then propound the uſes.

Godsname.

C *I. The meaning. Name*] The word aſcribed to God, is here taken generally; firſt, for God *himſelfe*; as Pſal.20.1. *The name of the God of Iacob defend thee:* that is, the God of *Iacob* defend thee: Rom. 10. 13. *Whoſoever ſhall call upon the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved;* that is, upon the Lord. Secondly, it here betokens any thing whereby *God may be knowen*, as men are by their names: and thus it comprehends, I. his *divine attributes*; as juſtice, mercie, power, wiſdome, &c. II. his *word*, the holy Scriptures which reveale to them the true knowledge of God. III. Gods *Iudgements*, publike or private; for thereby hee makes knowen his preſence, his power and juſtice. IV. his *works* and *creatures*; for all theſe beare a ſtamp of Gods name, and in them may the inviſible things of God be ſeene, Rom.1.20.

Two kinds of honour.

D *Hallowed*, or *ſanctified*] To *hallow Gods name*, is to glorifie Gods name, as Joh.12.28. and this wee doe, when wee give unto him the higheſt honour that may be: the higheſt I ſay, becauſe there are two kinds of honour; Firſt, the honour of religion, when wee give our hearts to God, loving him, fearing him, truſting, and delighting in him above all; which we teſtifie by all outward adoration preſcribed in Gods word: this is the higheſt honour of all. Secondly, there is the honour of ſocietie, which paſſeth between man and man in Common-wealths; and it conſiſteth in the acknowledgement of preheminence and ſuperioritie in another, either by word or geſture, civilly: thus ſubjects honour Princes and Magiſtrates; and inferiours their

1. Religious.

2. Civill.

their ſuperiours. This is due to the creature: the former to the Creator only, and that is the honour we heare pray for.

How we hallow Gods name. 1. In himſelfe.

That we may yet the better underſtand the meaning of this petition, wee muſt know that Gods name is hallowed or ſanctifiſed of us two wayes: either in God himſelfe, or in his works. In himſelfe by three actions: 1. When we conceive God in our mindes, and acknowledge him as hee hath revealed himſelfe in his Word; to wit, Creator and Governour of all things, moſt holy, moſt wiſe, juſt, merciffull, &c. 2. When we *ſanctifie the Lord in our hearts*: that is, when we love him above all, and feare him above all, and put our truſt in him in all eſtates. 3. When wee praiſe and laud the name of God, for his goodnes: yea, though we ſhould never taſte of his ſpeciall favour, yet for his generall mercie, juſtice, and moſt wiſe providence, we ought to extoll the Lord with our mouthes.

= 1 Pet.3.15.

2. In his creatures.

Gods name is hallowed or ſanctified in his creatures, by three ſpeciall actions: 1. When we acknowledge the wiſdome of God, and his powerfull hand in everie creature. 2. When we have a reverent eſtimation of the creatures, and uſe them in Chriſtian ſobrietie, in regard the ſtamp of Gods power and wiſdome, which appeareth in them. 3. When wee ſanctifie our moderate uſe of them, by the word and prayer, as God requireth, 1 Tim.4.5. See the practice hereof in the word of God, which is his owne ſolemne ordinance, whereby he makes himſelfe knowen unto his Church: Therein we ſanctifie and hallow Gods name: I. When we acknowledge the wiſdome, mercie, and power of God in it: II. When we have a reverent eſtimation of the word, in regard of the glorious Image of God which appeareth in it: III. When we uſe it in a ſanctified and holy manner, comming unto it reverently with prepared hearts, hungring after the graces of God which are wrought thereby, and giving our ſelves in heart and life to be framed and ruled thereby. And thus we ſanctifie God in afflictions, (for they are his worke) when we labour to ſee the hand of God therein, in juſtice, mercie, and gre it wiſdome chaſtening us, when wee have a reverent regard to the hand of God appearing in them; and labour to bee humbled thereby for the increaſe of our repentance, and the exercise of our faith and patience.

How we ſanctifie God in his Word.

Thus then in this petition we deſire in mind, in heart, and life, to glorifie God both in himſelfe and in his workes: and the meaning of it may be thus expreſſed: *O Lord, open our eyes that we may know thee aright, and may diſcerne thy power, wiſdome, juſtice, and mercie: and inlarge our hearts that we may ſanctifie thee in our hearts, by making thee our feare, love, joy, and confidence: and upon our lips, that wee may bleſſe thee for thine infinite goodneſſe: yea, O Lord, open our eyes that wee may ſee thee in thy works, and ſtrike our hearts with reverence of thy name appearing in them: and grant that when wee uſe any one of them, wee may honour thee in our ſober and ſanctified uſe thereof.*

The Vſes. I. Wants to be bewailed.

Simple glorifie Gods name.

I. Here wee are to call to minde our wants, and to humble our ſoules for thoſe ſinnes, whereby we have hindred Gods glorie, or prophaned his name: and theſe eſpecially are foure: I. *Pride of heart*: a vile affection whereby wee ſeeke our own praiſe and glorie, and not Gods. This is naturall, and ſo the more hardly diſcerned; but while it is nourſhed, Gods glorie is neglected, and therefore when we deſire to *glorifie Gods name*, we muſt acknowledge and bewaile this inward corruption. II. *Want of zeale, coldneſſe* of heart towards God. This is an inward corruption which debaſeth the Lord in our hearts, and takes away that high eſteeme of God which ought to be in us. This cauſeth us to omit to glorifie God, and to defend the cauſe of God, and the honour of his name, when wicked men diſgrace and reproach the ſame: he that hath any inſight into his owne eſtate may perceive this in himſelfe: now it mightily hinders the glorie of God, and therefore we muſt unfainedly bewaile it in our owne hearts. III. *Hardneſſe of heart*; whereby wee are hindred from the true knowledge of God in his Word, and from diſcerning his wiſdome, power, juſtice, mercie, &c. in his workes, though wee have them before our eyes: Hence it comes, that either wee neglect the Word, and paſſe by the workes of God without conſideration; or if we uſe them, yet it is without glorie to God, or profit to our ſoules. Mark. 6. 5. *Chriſts owne Diſciples conſidered not the matter of the loaves, becauſe their hearts were hardened*: they diſcerned not, or at leaſt remembred not the power of God in that miracle, though themſelves were inſtruments about it, and they might perceive the fond to increaſe in their hands. IV. *Prophanenesſe and impietie in life*: for God is *glorified*, when wee bring forth the *fruits of grace*, Joh.15.8. and our *good workes* cauſe others to glorifie God, Matth. 5. 16. And therefore our prophane life is a reproach unto the Lord, and cauſeth others to diſhonour and blaſpheme his name, Rom. 2. 24. Now this prophanenesſe appeareth, either in meus ſpeech, by blaſpheming the name of God, abuſing his titles, attributes, his Word, his creatures, or any worke of his providence; or in their converſation, when they diſpoſe the whole courſe of their lives to wrong ends, ſeeking themſelves and not Gods glorie.

These are the ſpeciall ſinnes againſt Gods glorie, which wee are to ſee and to bewaile in our owne hearts: if wee ſee them not in our ſelves our caſe is the worſe, and wee muſt ſuſpect our ſelves the more: if wee perceive them in us, we muſt be humbled for them, yea, aſhamed and confounded in our owne hearts, thinking evill of our ſelves by reaſon hereof: and then ſhall we be able to ſay with ſome truth of

Lent,

heart, *O Lord, hallowed be thy name.* And indeed till wee bee inwardly humbled for theſe corruptions in ſome meaſure, the heart can never ſpeake the ſe words as a ſonne and daughter of God ought to doe.

2. Vſe. Graces to be deſired.

Secondly, this petition teacheth us, earneſtly to deſire of God thoſe ſpirituall graces, whereby wee may glorifie his name in our ſelves and others. The graces inabling us hereto, are theſe eſpecially: I. The true *knowledge of God*, as he hath revealed himſelfe in his word, and in the workes of his power and providence: for hee that knowes not God cannot poſibly glorifie his name. II. To *ſanctifie God in our hearts*; by loving, fearing, and truſting in him above all. This makes greatly for his glorie, when we depend upon him in ſoule and body for all good things. III. The *calves of our lips*, which is a ſacrifice of praiſe to God for all his mercies: Pſal. 50. 23. *Hee that offereth praiſe ſhall glorifie me.* IV. To *ſee Gods hand* in all his works, how mightie, wiſe, juſt, and gratious the Lord is. V. To *reverence the works of God* for his juſtice, mercie, power, &c. appearing in them. VI. To *vſe all his creatures reverently*, ſanctifying the ſame unto our ſelves by the word and prayer.

Theſe graces we muſt hunger after, and labour to have a lively feeling of in our hearts, and ſo ſhall we ſanctifie Gods name, and honour him in all his works. And hereby we ſhall know our ſelves to bee the ſonnes and daughters of God: wee may indeed belong to God in his ſecret counſell; but without theſe ſanctified affections, we are not effectually called, and ſo indeed not actually become Gods children.

2. Vſe. Duties to be practiſed.

Thirdly, whatſoever we aske of God in praier, wee muſt unfainedly endevour to practiſe in our lives: as therefore we pray that Gods name may be hallowed, ſo we muſt be careful to ſanctifie the ſame in our converſation. For this end we muſt have regard to three things:

Motives whereby we may glorifie God.

I. That our lives be unblameable, not tainted with any ſinne, that as *Paul* ſaid of earthly ſervants, *They muſt count their maſters worthy all honour, that the name of God be not evill ſpoken of*: ſo the ſame may bee verified in everie one of us towards the Lord our maſter in heaven. Away therefore with all Idolatrie, blaſphemous oathes, and curſed ſpeaking, with Sabbath-breaking, and all other ſinnes againſt the ſecond Table: for a prophane life brings great reproach upon the name of God which men profeſſe.

1 1 Tim. 6. 1.

2 II. We muſt prepound the right end of our life everie day in our calling and converſation, to wit, Gods honour and glorie, and not our owne praiſe, wealth, pleaſure, or dignitie.

3 III. When God offers occaſion by any worke of his providence, wee muſt endevour therein to glorifie and magnifie God: Example;

A Say God ſends a grievous dearth and famine of bread among us, or the plague of peſtilence as he hath done ſundry times; then muſt wee ſtrive herein to glorifie and praiſe Gods name: firſt, by labouring to ſee the hand of God ſmiting us for our ſins: ſecondly, by reverencing the worke of God, eſteeming it as his hand upon us: thirdly, by humbling our ſelves unto God, and renuing our repentance for our ſinnes, that have brought Gods judgements upon us. Thus ſhould wee glorifie God in his judgements; but alas, ſuch is our blindneſſe and ſecuritie, that though Gods hand be upon us, yet few lay it to heart: where is he that ſaith, [a] *What have I done?* nay, though God himſelfe *call unto weeping and mourning, and to girding with ſackcloth* (as the Prophet [b] ſpeaketh) *yet beholde, joy and gladneſſe, — eating and drinking*; ſo as Gods name is diſhonoured in his judgements. So when Gods bleſſings are upon us, we ſhould glorifie his name, by labouring to ſee his hand of mercie; and eſteeming of them reverently, with praiſe and thankſgiving to God that is the giver: but herein alſo men diſhonour God, by poring upon the meanes, praiſing their owne wit and induſtrie, and ſo *ſacrifice to their nets*, as the [c] Prophet ſaith.

a Ier. 8. 5.

b Iſa. 22. 12, 13.

c Hab. 1. 15, 16.

Motives to glorifie God.

1 Now becauſe this dutie is of great weight and importance, I will adde ſome ſpeciall reaſons to move us hereunto: I. From the neceſſitie hereof in Gods Church and children: for Gods name is diſhonoured over all the world. In the great dominions of the Turke, God is acknowledged, but yet out of the Trinitie: And the Jewes confeſſing God, deny Chriſt: The Papiſts in words confeſſe and acknowledge the Trinitie: but yet by their idolatrie they greatly rob God of his glorie, they rob Chriſt of his offices, and give divine worſhip unto creatures. And in the boſome of the Church are many Atheiſts, blaſphemers, oppreſſors, drunkards, adulterers, and voluptuous perſons, whoſe belly is their God; all which, though they will profeſſe God in word, yet by their workes they deny him; ſo that unleſſe Gods children ſeeke to maintaine and advance Gods glorie, it is like to be trampled and trodden under foot.

2 II. There is great danger to Gods children in omitting and neglecting this dutie; for by calling they are brought neere unto God: now God will bee glorified in all that come neere him: if wee doe not honour him according to our profeſſion, his hand will be upon us for his glorie in our confuſion: hence it was, that God ſlew [d] *Nadab* and *Abihu* the ſonnes of *Aaron*, for offering ſtrange fire before the Lord: and he debarred *Moſes* and *Aaron* out of the promiſed land, [e] *becauſe they glorified him not at the waters of ſtrife*. This made the wrath of God to burne like fire againſt the houſe of *Eli*, for [f] *the iniquitie of his ſonnes, which their father ſaw in them, and yet ſtayed them not, and ſo honoured them above the Lord.* Wee had need therefore to looke unto our ſelves, that wee glorifie God in

d Levit. 10. 1, 2.

e Numb. 20. 12.

f 1 Sam. 2. 29, 31. and 3. 13.

Matth. 6. verſ. 10.

in himſelfe and in his workes, elſe his hand will be upon us in ſoule or body, goods, or calling, or ſome other way for the glory of his juſtice: for God will not loſe his glory. III. If wee ſay, *Hallowed be thy name* with our mouth, and ſeeke not his honour in our life, wee bewray in our ſelves damnable hypocriſie, and make profeſſion of that ſinne which the Lord utterly deteſteth: wee eſteeme very baſely of diſſemblers among men; but much more odious is this ſinne in the matters of God: and therefore let the practice of our lives, ſhew the ſinceritie of our hearts, when wee pray for the glorifying of Gods name.

3

Vſe 4. We muſt labour to be ſanctified.

Fourthly, this petition teacheth us, that wee our ſelves muſt be hallowed and ſanctified, for elſe wee cannot hallow Gods name: *They that beare the veſſels of the Lord*, in his Sanctuary, *muſt bee cleane*, Iſa. 52. 11. How much more ought they to bee holy, that beare the glorious name of God? When *Ananias* doubted of going to *Paul*, the Lord tels him, [g] *he is a choſen veſſell unto mee to beare my name*: alluding to that ſtate of ſanctification, whereto the Lord had lately called him, whereby he made him a fit inſtrument for the glory of his name, in the miniſtery of the Goſpell. And the ſame ſtate muſt we labour after, if wee would be anſwerable to that we ſeeme to deſire in this petition. We muſt therefore labour to be new creatures, changed in minde and heart, for an unholy perſon, cannot truly deſire the glory of God; but when wee once feele the grace of ſanctification, then will the deſire of Gods glory breed in our hearts, and wee ſhall know how worthy the Lord is to have all glory given unto his Name.

g Act. 9. 15.

Vſe 5. More plentifull in thankſgivings than in petition.

Fifthly, if we compare this petition with the reaſon wherewith Chriſt concludes this prayer, wee ſhall ſee that the praiſe and honour of God, is the beginning and end of Chriſts prayer, and ſo as it were the firſt and laſt thing with Chriſt: whence wee learne, that we ought to be more frequent and plentifull in thankſ-giving unto God, than in petition and requeſt. Thus wee deale with thoſe that bee bountifull unto us on earth, wee give them many thankes for one good turne; and therefore ſhould wee much more abound in thankſgiving to our heavenly Father, from whom wee receive every good gift that wee enjoy. It beſeemes not the child of God to bee alwayes and onely begging, as though hee had nothing: but withall muſt be plentifull in thanks and praiſe, for that argues he hath a taſte of Gods mercy towards him: this made *David* ſay, [h] *Praiſe is a comely and pleaſant thing; it well becommeth upright men to be thankfull.* Our life of glory ſhall be ſpent in praiſing God, and therefore we ſhould inure our ſelves thereto, in this time of grace: and indeed, according to our thankſgiving is our grace; little praiſe, little grace; but he that abounds in thankſgiving, abounds in Gods bleſſings. Againe, hearty thankſgiving for that

h Pſal. 147. 1.

i Pſal. 33. 1.

A wee have, is an effectuall prayer for more increaſe.

Laſtly, the place wherein this petition is ſet in this prayer, teacheth us to ſeeke the glory of God ſimply and abſolutely before all other things. This ought to be the affection of Gods child, though hee ſhould receive no bleſſing from God, for looke what God preſers in his direction, that muſt we alwaies prefer in all our actions, though no good ſhould follow unto us thereupon: for this end, God gives us time to live in this world, that we might glorifie God in our places and callings; and hee that imployeth himſelfe other wayes prophaneth Gods name, and tranſgreſſeth this heavenly order here ſet downe by Chriſt, who is the wildome of his Father.

Gods glory muſt be ſought abſolutely.

B

V. 10 *Thy kingdome come.*

The Coherence. Chriſt having taught us to pray for the ſanctifying of Gods name, in the former petition, doth in this, and the reſt which follow, as it were expound the ſame, by directing us to the meanes whereby Gods name is hallowed of us: for then doe we glorifie Gods name, when he ſets up his kingdome in us; and wee ſuffer him to rule in our hearts, when wee doe his will, depend upon his providence for the things of this life, truſt in his mercy for the pardon of our ſinnes, and on his power and ſtrength againſt temptation. Now of them all, this ſecond hath the neereſt dependance upon the former, as being an eſpecial meanes thereof: for men ought to glorifie Gods name on earth, but of themſelves they cannot doe it, till God rule in their hearts by his Word and Spirit, and ſo ſet up his kingdome in them.

C

The meaning. Gods *kingdome* is two-fold; *General* and *Speciall*. Gods *generall kingdome* is his abſolute power and ſoveraignty, whereby hee ruleth all things in heaven, in earth, and in hell, even the Devils themſelves: Pſalm. 103. 19. *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, his kingdome ruleth over all*: and this we acknowledge in the end of this prayer, *For thine is the kingdome.* Now this wee pray not for, becauſe it is alwayes every where, no creature can hinder it, no not all the devils in hell: for every creature is ſubject hereunto, and can doe nothing but that which God either willeth or permitteth: [k] *according to his will he worketh in the army of heaven, and in the inhabitants of the earth; and none can ſtay his hands nor ſay, What doeſt thou?*

Gods kingdome two-fold. 1 Generall.

k Dan. 4. 32.

Gods ſpeciall kingdome is that, whereby hee ruleth his elect and choſen people, working his will not onely by them, as he doth in his generall kingdome, by the devils themſelves, but in them alſo by his holy Spirit: and it is called *ſpeciall*, becauſe it is not exerciſed over all the world, but onely over the Elect, whom he hath ordained to eternall life.

2 Speciall.

D

This ſpecial kingdom of God is two-fold, either of *grace* or of *glory*. The *kingdome of grace*

Gods kingdome of grace.

is a spirituall estate, wherein God makes men willingly subject to his written Word, by his spirit. I call the kingdome of grace, *a spirituall estate*, both because it is principally exercised in the conscience, and also because this regiment in the conscience, is by the Spirit of God. Secondly, I shew wherein it consists; namely, in 2 voluntary subjection of the whole man in soule, and body, and spirit, to the will of God, revealed in the word: Psalm. 110. 3. *Thy people shall come willingly in the day of assembling thine army, in holy beauty.* And this subjection standeth in three things: in *righteousnesse, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*, Roman. 14. 17, 18. In *righteousnesse*, that is, first, in Christs righteousnesse imputed; and secondly, in the righteousnesse of a good conscience; the ground whereof, is sanctification by the Spirit, which Christ gives to them, whom hee doth justifie. In *Peace*, that is, peace of conscience towards God, and peace with Gods Church; yea, with all creatures, so farre forth as is needfull for them. Now under peace, wee must comprehend love, and all duties of love: for as righteousnesse concernes the person in soule and bodie, so peace respects all duties and actions of the life: Righteousnesse is the root, from whence springeth this peace with every action thereof; for when the heart is sanctified, the life is reformed. Lastly, in *joy in the holy Ghost*: this is a fruit of both the former, respecting especially the state of affliction; for when a man is justified and sanctified, and hath peace towards God, then arisseth in his heart a spirituall delight in God, in all estates: yea, though great afflictions light upon him for Gods cause, yet hee beareth them with inward joy and delight, knowing that the spirit of glory, and of God, resteth upon him, and that hee shall bee glorified with Christ, if hee suffer with Christ: which things, while he compareth together, he little esteemeth the afflictions of this life, in respect of the glory that shall be revealed; [1] *For the light affliction that is but for a moment, causeth unto us a far more excellent and eternal weight of glory.* These are the branches of this spirituall subjection, which whosoever hath is a good subject in the kingdome of Grace; as the Apostle saith in the next verse, [m] *Hee that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable unto God, and approved of men.*

1 Cor. 6. 17.

m Rom. 14. 18.

Gods kingdome of glory.

The *kingdome of glory* is the blessed estate of Gods elect in heaven, whereby God in Christ becomes all things unto them immediately; 1 Cor. 15. 28. This estate of glory is a subjection also, but yet such a subjection, as is indeed a glorious regiment: for there wee raigne with Christ, in whom, and through whom, God himselfe becomes honour, peace, health, food, raiment, and all things needfull to the perfection of felicity. Now these two bring Gods Kingdome, differ thus; The state of Grace is the beginning and entrance to the state of glory: and the state of glory is the perfection of the state of grace. This state of glory is the city, and the state of grace, as it were, the suburbs of it. In this life, wee live in the kingdome of grace: but the kingdome of glory is reserved for the life to come: and this speciall kingdome of God in both these estates, doe we here pray for.

Thy kingdome] This imports that there is an other kingdome, even the kingdome of Satan, which is a kingdome of darknesse, full of all disorder and confusion through sinne, which greatly hindereth and annoyeth Gods kingdome of grace especially.

Come] That is, to us men in the world; and then it commeth, when God doth erect and establish the same in their hearts: now unto perfection it comes by five degrees: 1. When God gives unto men the outward meanes of salvation, wherein hee doth reveale his grace and favour in Christ; as the Gospell preached, which is therefore called the *word of the Kingdome*, Matth. 13. 19. And so Christ (having relation to his preaching, which he confirmed by miracles among the Jewes) saith, *The kingdome of God is come unto you*, Luke 11. 20. and being demanded by the Pharisies, *when the kingdome of God should come?* he tels them, *it was among them*, Luk. 17. 21. meaning, that it was brought unto them, by the ministery of *Iohn Baptist*, of himselfe, and of his Disciples; although indeed it were without profit to many of them. 2. When the word preached inlightens the mind, so as a man knows and understands the mysterie of the Gospell, which is the Law of this Kingdome. 3. When a man is thereby regenerate, and so brought into this kingdome: for by regeneration wee have effectuall entrance into the state of grace, wherein Christ rules in us by his Word and Spirit, and wee yeeld subjection unto him. 4. At the end of this life, when the body goeth to the earth, but the soule to God that gave it, being translated to the joyes of heaven, in the glory of this kingdome. 5. At the last judgement, when body and soule being united againe, are both made partakers of the glory of this kingdome: and this is the full and perfect comming of it.

So then our request to God in this petition, is to this effect; *O Father, let thy kingdome come to us that bee pilgrimes and strangers here on earth: prepare us for it, and enter us into it, that bee yet without; renne us by thy Spirit, that wee may be subject to thy will, confirme us also in this estate, that our soules after this life, and both soule and body at the day of judgement may bee fully glorified: yea, Lord hasten this glory to us, and to all thine Elect.*

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Mans nature bondage under sinne.

Matth. 6. verse 10.

dage, *for he that committeth sinne, is the servant of sinne*: and where sinne raigneth, there the devill hath dominion. And hence it comes that we rebel so much against the kingdom of God, and refuse to stoope to the scepter of his Word. Indeed this bondage is weakened in Gods children, but none is wholly freed from it in this life, as *Pauls* complaint declares, Rom. 7. 14. *The Law is spirituall, but I am carnall, sold under sinne.* The naturall man is dead in sinne and feeles it not; wee therefore must labour to feele in our selves this spirituall bondage under sinne; and when we feele it, we must bewaile it, and so shew some life of grace to be in us. This *Paul* did, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* Looke as the prisoner feeles his bolts and fetters, so sensibly should wee feele the chaine of sin, wherewith our soules are kept in bondage; and til we feele it and bewaile it, the Kingdome of Christ doth not come unto us: we must therfore every day, crie unto Christ our Lord, that hee would shew himselfe to be our Redeemer, by breaking the fetters of sinne, wherewith our soules are kept in bondage, and giving us that free spirit, which may fully erect his blessed Kingdome in our hearts: *for where the spirit is, there is liberty*, 2 Cor. 3. 17.

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Secondly, we must bewaile the sinnes of all the world, in the transgression of Gods Law, wherby God it dishonoured, and his kingdome hindred, and the kingdome of darknesse furthered: 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8. *Iust Lot vexed his righteous soule, with the unclean conversation of the wicked of his time.* 1 King. 19. 10. *When Elias saw the children of Israel forsake Gods covenant, breake downe his altars, and slay his Prophets with the sword, then he became very zealous for the Lord of hosts.* Psal. 119. 136. *Mine eyes* (saith *David*) *gush out with rivers of water, because they keepe not thy Law.* ver. 139. *My zeale hath even consumed me, because mine enimies, have forgotten thy Law.* Mar. 3. 5. *Christ mourned for the hardnesse of the harts of the people*: and Luk. 19. 41, 42. *he wept over Ierusalem, for that they knew not the day of their visitatiõ.* Now look how these were affected with the raigning sins of their times, so must wee also mourne for their sinnes that raigne among us; as Atheisme, and prophanenesse, contempt of Gods Word, blasphemie, Sabbath-breaking, oppression, crueltie, and pride. All good subjects are grieved much when they see forren enemies display among them banners of victory; how much more then ought the godly to grieve, when they see impietie practised with an high hand, which is as it were a flag of defiance in the Kingdome of Christ, and a speciall ensigne of Satans triumphing in the increase of his kingdome of darknesse? When the devil sees one that hath lived in sinne, but cast a looke toward the kingdome of Christ, he rageth greatly, and labours by all meanes to turne him backe: and when wee see those that have made profession of religion, returne againe to the lists of their former ignorance, O it should grieve our soules, and cause us to pray, *thy Kingdome come.* Doe wee perceive the Turke, or Pope, or any instrument of Satan, either by subtiltie or tyranny, to hinder the Gospell preached, which is the scepter of Christs Kingdome, and the arme of God, whereby hee puls men from the kingdome of darknesse? O then we should mourne. Or doe wee see the want of Gods ordinance in preaching, sacraments, and discipline, which serve for the furtherance of Christs kingdome: or the Lords people committed to ignorant or idle Ministers, to scandalous Teachers, either for life or doctrine? In all these wee have cause of mourning, and they should stirre up our hearts to cry unto the Lord, *Thy kingdome come.*

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Psal. 119. 18.

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Psal. 119. 18.

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Duties furthering Gods kingdome.

Whatsoever we aske in prayer, that must we endevour after in life and conversation, else we

mocke God, ſaying well, and doing nothing. Firſt therefore, as we ſay, *Thy kingdome come*, ſo muſt we ſeeke to meet it, and ſtrive to enter into it: for this end God gives us time to live in this world, that here wee might enter the gate of grace, and wait for the fruition of glory: and therefore wee muſt diligently frequent the ſiſtorbs of this heavenly Jeruſalem, even the preaching of the word, and therein labour both for true *humiliation* and *converſion*, or elſe wee cannot enter into this Kingdome, Matth. 18. 3. John 3. 5. Firſt, wee muſt have the pride of our hearts pulled downe, and become as little children, being humbled in our ſelves through the knowledge of our ſinnes, and the feeling of that miſery which is due unto us for them: yea, wee muſt confeſſe them unto God, and cry unto him for mercy, and by this means lay aſide this burthen, which hinders our entrance into the gate of grace. Secondly, wee muſt be converted and changed by the renewing of our minds, our hearts muſt cleave unto God, and we muſt carry therein a reſolute purpoſe not to ſinne: when theſe things bee in us, wee enter into Gods Kingdome; but till wee endevour after them in ſome truth, wee ſay in vaine, *Thy Kingdome come*.

1

Secondly, we muſt be careſull to bring forth the fruits of this Kingdome; for therefore doth he ſend it amongſt men, and for want hereof doth he take it from them: Matth. 21. 43. Now theſe fruits are *righteouſneſſe, peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. whereof we have [a] ſpoken before: all which, we muſt labour to find in our hearts, and to expreſſe in our lives, elſe this kingdome ſhall be taken from us, and we ſhall never ſee the glory of it.

2

[a] Abraham, verſing with ſpirituall.

Thirdly, hence wee muſt learne to be contented in all eſtates of this life whatſoever, the hope of the glory of this kingdome which wee pray for, muſt ſwallow up all the ſorrowes that earthly calamities can bring upon us: This it was that made the Patriarkes to walke contented in the ſtate of Pilgrims and ſtrangers here on earth, Heb. 11. 13, 14. Yea, this renues [b] *the inner man*, it cheers the heart, and keeps it from fainting, *though the outward man perriſh*, to look after the joyes of this kingdome, which are *the things not ſeene*: and therefore Chriſt herewith comforts his Diſciples againſt the ſorrow of affliction, ſaying, *Feare not little flocke, it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you the kingdome*, Luke 12. 32.

3

Againſt ſoreneſſe in tribulation.

[b] 2 Cor. 4. 16.

Fourthly, wee muſt all labour in our places and callings, to bring one another into this kingdome, one neighbour another, and one friend another; Eze. 18. 30. *Returne*, (ſaith the Lord to the houſe of Israel) *and cauſe one another to returne*. This the Prophet Iſay noteth as a practice of the ſubjects of this Kingdome, that [c] *euery one ſaid to another, come, let us go up to the mountaine of the Lord*, Iſa. 2. 3. But the Heads of families eſpecially, muſt looke to the practice of this duty, and labour to bring Gods kingdome into their families: for this end they muſt see to theſe things; firſt, that there be no maniſeſt or open ſin permitted in their families: rid thy houſe of ſuch a perſon, if thou canſt not reforme him, Pſal. 101. 7. Secondly, inſtruct thy family in the way of the Lord, that the ymay know to live righteouſly and uprightly both before God and man. Thirdly, ſet up and maintaine the private worſhip of God in thy family, joine thou with them in holy duties, eſpecially in daily calling upon the name of God. In regard of theſe and ſuch like duties it is, that the [e] Scripture aſcribes ſalvation to a family, where the maſter or the governour of the houſe is converted to the faith. And for the practice hereof, the holy Patriarkes are commended to al poſterity: God ſaith of *Abraham*, [d] *I know him, that hee will command his ſonnes, and his houſhold after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord*: and [e] *Iacob commands his family to put away their ſtrange gods, and to cleanſe themſelves*: and [f] *Iaſhuah* profeſſed publikely, *That hee and his family would ſerve the Lord*.

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[c] Luke 19. 9.

[d] Gen. 18. 19.

[e] Gen. 35. 2.

[f] Ioſh. 24. 15.

5 Prepare to die.

Fifthly, hence wee muſt learne, every day to prepare our ſelves to die: for by death our ſouls enter into the glory of this kingdome, which we pray may come unto us; and therefore we muſt bee ready to receive it every day, that whenſoever our King commeth unto us, either by death, or in the laſt judgement, we may paſſe from grace to glory. And indeed wee cannot with comfort make this petition, unleſſe wee bee in ſome meaſure prepared for death, and that every day. Now being prepared, wee muſt *wait*, as *Iob* [g] did, *every day till our changing come*. Looke how the godly in the old Teſtament looked for Chriſts firſt comming in the fleſh; ſo muſt we wait for his comming to us, either by death, or judgement; neither muſt any thing diſmay us in this waiting, no not death it ſelfe: for the ſooner we die, the ſooner wee may enter into glory. And here wee may take a view of the monſtrous hypocriſie of the world: for who will not ſay theſe words, *Thy kingdome come*? But yet the moſt men neglect to prepare themſelves for entrance into this kingdome; nay, many contemne the word and praier, which are the meanes whereby wee have admittance into the ſtate of grace, and are prepared for the Kingdome of glory.

[g] Iob. 14. 14. Luke 2. 25.

6

Sixthly, wee may here learne of our Saviour Chriſt the practice of humility, and in all things to give all glory to God; for though this kingdome pertaine equally to him (as hee is God) with the Father; yet becauſe he hath it from the Father, as he is the Sonne, therefore he will have it wholly attributed unto him: for he teacheth us to ſay, *Our Father, Thy kingdome come*.

7 Gods kingdome doings proſperity.

Laſtly, here obſerve the neceſſity of this petition, in reſpect of our outward eſtate; for the comming of this kingdome to any eſtate, is a ſpeciall cauſe of proſperity and happineſſe unto

unto in: for where this kingdome is, Gods hand of bleſſing and protection is in a ſpeciall manner: herein the Lord raigneth and his glorious and bleſſed Angels, which are mightie in ſtrength and power, keepe watch and guard in that kingdom, and about that people who have the Lord for their King and God. Hence it is, that this our Kingdome hath ſo long enjoyed peace and protection from many dangerous aſſaults, becauſe wee embrace and profeſſe the Goſpel, which is the ſcepter of Gods kingdom; and if wee could doe it in ſincerity, and walke worthy of the Lord our King, our proſperitie ſhould bee as the floods, and our peace as the Sunne and Moone in heaven. And therefore they that love the peace of this kingdome, muſt embrace and obey the Goſpell, and pray for the happy and flourihing eſtate thereof: for therein ſtands our peace.

A

B

Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.

The Coherence. This petition dependeth on both the former thus; as a meanes whereby we doe that which wee deſire in the firſt petition: for Gods name is glorified, when his will is done: and as a manifeſtation of that which we deſire in the ſecond petition, for there we pray, that Gods kingdome may come into us, and he rule in our hearts by his word and ſpirit: now here we crave that we may doe his will, and ſo teſtifie our ſelves to be his loyall ſubjects.

C

The meaning. This petition is propounded in a compariſon, which naturally ſtandeth thus; *As thy will is done in heaven, ſo let thy will bee done in earth*. And it hath two parts: The firſt reſpects the grace of obedience which we pray for, *Thy will be done in earth*. The ſecond ſhews the right manner of performing it, *As it is in heaven*.

For the firſt, *Thy will*, &c. Gods will is onely one, conſidered in it ſelfe, as God is one: yet for our underſtanding, it may be thus diſtinguiſhed: It is either *abſolute*, or *revealed*. Gods *abſolute will* is the will of his good pleaſure, whereby according to his eternall counſell, hee determines of all things, what ſhall be done, or what ſhall not bee done, and in what manner. This abſolute will extendeth over all creatures, and over all their actions: Epheſ. 1. 11. *We are predeſtinate according to the purpoſe of him that worketh all things after the counſell of his owne will*. Rom. 9. 19. *Who hath reſiſted his will?* Mat. 10. 26. *Without this will of God, a ſparrow cannot fall to the ground*. And this abſolute will of God is hidden from us, till God reveale it by the event. Gods *revealed will* is the ſacred doctrine of God in his Word, whereby he ſignifieth unto man, ſo far reas concernes his happineſſe and ſalvation, what hee ought to doe, or what he ought not to doe. This is not Gods abſolute will, but rather an effect thereof concerning man, revealing unto him, not what hee ſimply and abſolutely willeth to bee done, for that muſt needs bee done; but what is pleaſing or diſpleaſing unto him, done by man, and what he will have man to doe, or not to doe, if hee deſire to come to life, and would not be condemned. And this revealed will comprehendeth both the Law and Goſpell, with all their Commandements, prohibitions, threatnings, exhortations, promiſes, and ſuch like, whereto the Apoſtle hath relation, when hee ſaith, *Prove what is the good will of God, and acceptable*, Rom. 12. 2.

A

Gods abſolute will.

Gods revealed will.

D

Now this diſtinction of Gods will being according to the Scripture, hath his ſite in this place: for when wee ſay, *Thy will be done*, wee meane not the abſolute, but the *revealed will of God. Reaſons. 1.* The abſolute will of God is always done, and cannot be reſiſted; *My counſell ſhall ſtand* (ſaith [a] the Lord) *and I will doe whatſoever I will*: and againe, *Who hath reſiſted his will?* that is, his abſolute will: for his revealed will is generally tranſgreſſed by men, and men doe that which ſeemeth good in their owne eyes, notwithſtanding God reveale his will to the contrary. II. A man may ſometime diſſent from the abſolute will of God without ſinning, ſo he bee ſtill ſubmit himſelfe to the will of God, reſting therein, when it is reveaſed. Thus *Abraham* [c] prayed for the ſafety of Sodome (yet ſubmiſſively, which God willed and decreed to deſtroy) and *David* [d] prayed for the life of his child, which God would have to die: and our [e] Saviour Chriſt prayed for the removall of that cup, which God had abſolutely decreed hee ſhould drinke of, yet ſubmitting his will unto his Fathers. And [f] *Paul* according to his Apoſtolike function, deſired to preach the Goſpel in *Ely ſiania*, but the Spirit ſuffered him not; which ſheweth plainly it was not the will of God that he ſhould preach there, and yet he deſired it religiouſly without ſinne, as did the reſt before mentioned. And as in will, ſo in affection a man may diſſent from Gods abſolute will without ſinne: Chriſt as the Sonne of God, knew his Fathers will, concerning the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and yet [g] *he wept for it*, in a tender compaſſion over their miſery to come: and ſo the brethren at *Cæſarea*, [h] *wept and lamented for Pauls going to Ieruſalem*, though *Agabus* prophecied that God would have it ſo: neither muſt this ſeeme ſtrange unto us, for two things may remaine both good, and yet differ one from another; and ſo may mans created will differ from Gods abſolute and uncreated will, and yet both remaine good.

[a] Iſa. 46. 10.

[b] Rom. 9. 19.

[c] Gen. 18. 23. 27.

[d] 2 Sam. 12. 16. 19.

[e] Matth. 26. 39.

[f] Act. 16. 7.

[g] Luke 19. 41.

[h] Act. 21. 13.

Branches of Gods revealed will.

Having found that this petition muſt be underſtood of the revealed will of God, wee now come to ſearch out the ſpeciall branches of Gods revealed will: which wee ſhall finde in ſeverall places of the holy Scripture. The firſt is, the *converſion of a ſinner*, Ezek. 33. 11. *As I live* (ſaith the Lord) *I will not the death of a ſinner, but that the wicked turne from his way and live*. The ſecond is, that wee

deny our selves, and rely wholly on our Saviour Christ Jesus for life and salvation: John 6. 40. *This is the will of God, that he that seeth the Son, and believeth in him, should have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.* The third is our *sanctification*, in soule, and body, and spirit: 1 Thes.4.3. *This is the will of God, even your sanctification.* The fourth, is that every one that lives in the Church of God, beside his generall calling of a Christian, should have a *particular calling to live in*, wherein hee must seeke the glory of God, in the good of others: 1 Cor.7.20. *Let every man abide in the same vocation wherein hee is called, and therein walke with God*, v.24. The fifth part of Gods will is to *subject our selves* under the hand of God in all crosses and afflictions whatsoever: when the brethren at *Cæsarea* saw *Pauls* resolution to goe to Jerusalem, notwithstanding the bonds that there remained for him, they said (as it were expounding this petition) *The will of the Lord be done*, Act.21.14.

3 4 5

Bee done] According to the Scripture there be two degrees of doing Gods will: the first is prescribed in the Gospell, to wit, a sincere endevour and strife according to all the power of grace that God hath given us, to doe the will of God; and this especially is here meant. The second is commanded in the Law, and it is a fulfilling of Gods will, doing that which God commandeth in that manner of perfection which he commandeth: but this is not attained unto in this life: and therefore our desire of God in this petition is, that he would give us grace, sincerely to endevour to doe his whole will here on earth, and to hasten that time and state unto us, wherein we shall doe it perfectly as the Law requires.

Obedience to God's will.

Perfection.

1 Use. Wants to be bewailed both in our selves and others.

I. This petition teacheth us to bewaile our naturall disposition, whereby wee are prone to rebell against the will of God, being wholly bent to disobedience in doing that which is evill.

Hinderances to obedience.

II. We must bewaile our naturall hypocrisie, even that which remaineth in us after grace received: for though we may say these words, yet we cannot possibly have our hearts affected with such a perfect desire after obedience to Gods will, as we ought to have.

III. Though we have never so much grace, yet here wee must labour and bewaile our want of obedience in all good duties: for though we give our selves to doe good things, yet the best of us all fails in the manner of doing of them; as in hearing the Word, in receiving the Sacraments, and prayer; so as wee must be humbled for our wants, and confesse that we are unprofitable servants, when wee have done all that is commanded us, Luke 17.10.

Secondly, wee must bewaile the sinnes of others, whereby they disobey the will of God, and so rebell against him; hereby God is dishonoured, and therefore in zeale of Gods glory, and love to our brethren, wee must be grieved when others sinne. Thus was *David* affected, Psal.119.136. and *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12.21. *I feare lest when I come unto you, my God abase me among you, and I shall bewaile many of them that have sinned already.*

A

2 Use. Graces to be desired.

Desires furthering our obedience.

As wee must bewaile the wants that hinder the doing of Gods will in our selves and others; so wee must stirre up our hearts unto heavenly desires after those graces whereby Gods will may be done. As first, that wee may have grace to deny our selves, our owne wils and affections; for naturally we are herein unlike God, and like the Devill: and this must every one learne that would bee Christs Disciple, Luke 9. verse 23.

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Secondly, that God would incline and dispose our hearts towards his holy word, that we may not onely know, but obey Gods revealed will. This was *Davids* usuall request; Psalm. 119.27. *Make mee to understand the way of thy testimonies*: and 36. *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies.* For how should wee doe the will of God, unlesse wee know it? and how shall wee know it, unlesse our hearts affect the meanes of grace and of obedience.

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Thirdly, that God would hasten that time and state unto us, wherin we shall perfectly doe the will of God: that is our state of glory.

3

Fourthly, that under every crosse which God shall lay upon us, wee may possesse our soules with patience, and so subject our selves to Gods absolute will. Thus *Paul* prayes in behalfe of the Colossians, that *GOD would strengthen them by the power of his might, unto all patience and long suffering with ioyfulnesse.* Col.1.12.

4

C

Fifthly, that God would turne the hearts of men from sinne, and bringthem every where to the obedience of his will.

5

3 Use. Duties to be practised.

Duties furthering our obedience.

Because we must seeke to practise that which we aske in prayer, therefore hereby we are also taught to endevour our selves after these good duties: First, *to prove what is the good will of God, and acceptable*, Rom.12.2. We must by

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often triall of our actions by the word of God, become expert in Gods will; use in all things makes perfect, and therefore in all our affaires we must consult with God, whether the things wee goe about bee agreeable to his will. Most men will have an eye to the lawes of the Land in their civill affaires, as in buying and selling; and why should wee not bee as wise for our soules in the matters of God? Doe we not dissemble with GOD when wee say with our tongues, *Thy will bee done*, and yet in life and conversation, have no regard to square our workes thereby?

Secondly, wee must be strict in the matter of sinne, making conscience of every evill way; yea, even of the first motions unto sinne, that

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never

never come to consent: for this petition for obedience, respects not onely our words and deeds, but our secret thoughts: for even they must bee brought to obedience to God, 2 Cor. 10.5.

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Thirdly, wee must seeke to cut off all things that hinder us from doing Gods will: we must mortifie and crucifie the lusts of the flesh, and all sinfull motions of our corrupt hearts; for these make us rebels against God in transgressing his will. This is an hard thing to doe, and unto a naturall man of himselfe altogether impossible, and therefore wee must use spirituall meanes: for the deeds of the flesh must bee mortified by the Spirit, Roman.8.13. Now the ground of this worke is the death of our Saviour Christ applied by faith to our corrupt hart; *for the olaman is crucified with him*, (as the Apostle *Paul* saith) *that the body of sinne might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin*, Roman. 6. 6. This therefore must wee doe, if we thinke our selves to have part in Christ; we must persuade our hearts, that when our Saviour Christ was upon the Crosse in our roome and stead, bearing the punishment of our sinnes, then were we, in regard of the old man, crucified with him; the vertue and efficacy whereof, we shall undoubtedly finde in our selves, for the mortifying of sinne, when wee doe truly beleeve; for our fellowship with Christ begins in his death; and if wee bee dead to sinne, how can the motions thereof yet live and reigne in us? When a malefactor is put to death, he ceaseth from his bad courses; and so, if our corruption be crucified with our Saviour Christ, it must not reigne in our hearts, to bring forth the fruits of sinne. Let us therefore meditate on the death of our Saviour Christ, and apply it to our selves by faith, and consider the vilenesse of our sinnes, in the bitternesse of his passion; and then no doubt wee shall bee moved to strive against evill motions: *For if we be Christs, wee have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, Gal.5.24.

A

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Fourthly, we must not live inordinately, but in that sort which God injoineth Christians in his word: every one must have a double calling: the generall calling of a Christian, common to all that live in the Church, concerning the service of God, in righteousnesse and holinesse; and a particular lawfull calling, in some set state of life, tending to the good of the Church, common-wealth, or family, wherin a man must glorifie God in the good of men: this is to live in order, and hee that wanteth both, or one of these, lives inordinately, for God would have every man to abide in that vocation wherein he hath called him: every one therefore according to his gift and grace received of God, must live in a lawfull calling, and hee that doth not so, resisteth Gods will. Whereby wee see that wandring beggers are not to bee suffered in Church or common-wealth, for they live without any calling, and so transgresse Gods

4 An orderly life.

C

D

will: yea, their course of life is here also condemned, that spend their life in sports and gaming; for such a life is rebellion against God, who will be glorified in workes done by vertue of our lawfull calling.

Fifthly, it is the will of God, that through manifold afflictions wee should enter into his kingdome; and therefore when any crosse befalls us walking in our lawfull callings, we must endevour to subject our selves patiently to the will of God therein: in prosperity wee are cheerefull and thankfull, but when affliction comes, our nature would repine: O remember we say in all estates, *Thy will be done*: and therefore in the most bitter crosses that can befall us, we must labour to say with *Iob*, *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away: blessed be the name of the Lord.* Job 1. 21. So did the Prophet *David* being banished his kingdome by his owne sonne, 2 Sam. 15. 26. *But if thus thou say, Behold, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him doe to mee as seemeth good in his eyes*: and chap. 16. 10, 11. when *Shemei* cursed him, he stayed *Abishai* from revenge, upon consideration of Gods will to have it so: saying, *Suffer him to curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.*

5 Patience under the crosse.

In earth as it is in heaven.

Having spoken of the grace of obedience desired in this petition, wee now come to the manner how it must be performed: to wit, *In earth as it is in heaven*: that is, of us men living on earth, as the blessed Angels and glorified Saints doe it in heaven: for *the Angels that excell in strength, doe Gods commandements in obeying the voice of his word.* And because this exposition is generally received, I will not stand to prove it; this onely we must remember, that here wee pray not to performe obedience equall in measure and degree, to the obedience of the Saints and Angels in heaven, but such as is like unto it: for this note of comparison here imports a likenesse and resemblance, and not equality.

a Psal.103.20.

Resemblance from obedience to the Angels.

Now this likenesse here stands in 4. things: First, in *cheerefulnesse and willingnesse*: for the holy Angels obey the Commandement of God freely, and readily, without murmuring or constraint: for this cause they are said to *come and stand before God*, Iob 1.6. *and to behold his face*, Matth. 18. 10. to express their voluntary service unto God: and so should Gods children obey God, as *Paul* speaketh of [b] *Philemons* beneficence, *it must not bee as it were of necessity, but willingly.* As in the case of *Alms-giving*, [c] *God loves a cheerful giver*, so in all obedience hee likes a cheerefull doing: and therefore hee faith, [d] *if there be first a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath.* In this regard, *Peter* beseaught the Elders, [e] *to feed the flocke of God, depending on them: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready minde*: and the Apostle

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b Philem.14.

c 2 Cor 9.7.

d 2 Cor.8.12.

e 1 Pet 5.2.

Paul

1 Cor. 9.17. *Paulhimself: If I doe willingly, I have a reward.* This verum the Prophet *David* expressed notably, Psal. 40. 6, 7, 8. when God as it were bored new eares in his soule, then he said, *Lo I come, I desire to doe thy will.*

2 Secondly, in *priority*, for the Angels preferre to doe the will of God, before all other things: and therefore they are said to stand in his presence continually as it were waiting upon his pleasure: and the like affection for obedience unto God, must bee in all his children. This *Abraham* notably testifies, when at Gods command he could have *killed Isaac*; testifying thereby, that he preferred obedience unto God, before the dearest thing in the world: this also we may see in *David*, Psal. 119. 14. *I have had as great delight in the way of thy testimonies, as in all riches*: and vers. 127. *I love thy commandements above gold, yea, above much fine gold*: and in our Saviour Christ, who said, when hee was weary and hungry, *My meat is to doe the will of him that sent me, and to finish his worke*, Joh. 4. 34.

Gen. 22. 12.

3 Thirdly, *in speed*, and *quicknesse*: for the Angels doe Gods will without all delay or slacknesse, which the Scripture signifies by their wings, and flying, which it ascribeth unto them: and the like alacrity should Gods children shew in their obedience unto God, Psal. 119. 60. *I made haste and delayed not to keepe thy commandements.*

Isa. 19. 13.

4 Fourthly, in *faithfulnesse*; the Angels doe not Gods will by halves or peece-meale, but thoroughly and purposely, wherein forever God imployeth them: and so should wee bee faithfull in doing Gods will, endeavouring to yeeld sincere obedience, not to some, but to all Gods commandements which concerne us: Psal. 119. 6. *I shall not be confounded when I have respect unto all thy commandements.* 2 King. 23. 25. King *Josias* turned to the Lord, *with all his soule, with all his heart, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses*: an example to be followed of all Gods children, that so they may be like to the blessed Angels.

The 1. Vse. Wants to be bewailed.

1 First, this patterne of Angelicall obedience here propounded for our imitation, must teach us to acknowledge and bewaile the naturall hardnesse, deadnesse, and untowardnesse of our hearts, in yeelding obedience unto the will of God: if wee feele not this skill and untoward heart, we may suspect our selves of the want of grace, for every gracious heart feeles it more or lesse, and bewailes it unto God: and so must we doe, if wee say in truth, *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.*

2 Secondly, wee must here also bewaile the want of sincerity and faithfulnesse in doing Gods will: our maymed and halt obedience, shewes how farre we come short of this Angelicall example: many content themselves with the outward service of the body, and never regard the inward worship of the heart; and others have respect to outward duties of pietty, that concerne God, but for uprightnesse and mercy towards men, they little regard: this the Angels doe not.

2. Vse. Graces to be desired.

Hereby also wee must learne to pray for the Spirit of freedome, whereby we may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and so may the more freely, and cheerefully, and heartily endeavour to doe Gods will: Psal. 51. 12. *Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and stablish me by thy free Spirit*: the holy Ghost is therefore called *the free Spirit*, because it gives liberty from the bondage of sinne, and makes the heart free, and forward, and cheerefull in Gods service; *for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, 2 Cor. 3. 17.

B

3. Vse. Duties to be practised.

Because wee must practise the good things we pray for, therefore here wee are taught to frame our lives to an Imitation of the blessed Angels. Though we cannot attaine to the measure of their obedience, yet wee must endeavour after their manner of obedience, in *readinesse*, &c. and so by following them beginne our heaven in this world. This will not stand with their humour, who account zeale in religion, affected precisenesse: but such as call God Father in sincerity, must fall before them the obedience of the holy Angels, as a patterne for their imitation. Now in them we may observe these things for us to follow:

Imitation of the Angels.

C

First, they desired before Christs incarnation, to looke into the mystery of our redemption wrought by Christ, 1 Pet. 1. 12. although it concerne them not as it doth us: for they never fell, and they are established by another grace than of redemption: now herein we must follow the Angels, or (if it were possible) goe beyond them, for *Christ tooke not the Angels but the seed of Abraham*: his redemption concerns us, and therfore we much more must be diligent searchers out of this mystery in the Gospell.

1

Secondly, the Angels are maintainers of true religion, and of the worship of God: for the Law was given by Angels, Gal. 3. 19. The most of *Daniels* visions were shewed by an Angell; and so was the revelations unto *John*, Revel. 1. 1. the Angels brought the Apostles out of prison to preach the Gospell sundry times. They are enemies to Idolatry; for, Apoc. 19. 10. when *John* would have worshipped the Angel, he forbade him, saying, *See thou doe it not, worship God*: herein also we must be followers of Angels, by furthering the Gospel and true worship of God to the uttermost of our power; by shunning all Idolatry, & shewing our selves enemies to all the enemies of God and of his truth.

D

2

a Act. 5. 19. and 12. 7, 8. and 16. 26.

Thirdly, the Angels were always serviceable unto Christ: they brought the tidings of his birth to the shepherds, Luk. 2. 9, 10. *They ministred unto him in his temptation*, Matth. 4. 11. *in his agony*, Luk. 22. 43. *in his resurrection*, Mat. 28. 2. *and ascension*, Act. 1. 10. and so

5

Matth. 6. vers. 10.

should we performe unto Christ all the service we can.

4 Fourthly, they spend their time in praising and lauding the name of God: and so should we labour to have our hearts inlarged for his glorie, and our mouthes filled with his praises.

5 Fifthly, they be serviceable for our good, if we be Gods children, though they be farre better than we are: Heb. 1. 14. *They are ministring spirits, sent forth to minister for their sakes which shall be heires of salvation*. Psal. 91. 12. *They are appointed to beare Gods children in their hands.* Psal. 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord pitcheth round about them that feare him*: And all this they doe unto us of love, as though it were not injoyned them: So we after their example must imploy our selves in soule and bodie, calling, credit, and all we have for the good of men.

6 Sixthly, the Angels are joyfull when sinners are humbled and converted from sinne unto God: Luk. 15. 10. and they are grieved when men by sinne dishonour God. And the like affections should be in us: we should mourne for all sinne in our selves and others, whereby God is dishonoured; and have our hearts to leape for joy, when sinners repent and turne unto God. In the world to come we shall be like the Angels in heaven in glorie, Matth. 22. 30. let us therefore here testifie this hope by beginning our heaven upon earth, in becomming like to the Angels, though not in glorie, yet in obedience.

Here lastly observe, what honour we are to give to the Angels of heaven, namely, the honour of Imitation, becomming like unto them in obedience, and treading in the steps of their vertues: but for the honour of invocation, that is due to God alone, and we must not give it to Angels: damnable therefore is the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome, who pray unto the Angels, and give unto them the honour of God in religious worship.

Vse 4.

Fallum. de sanct. lear. l. 1. c. 19. missale Rom. a. Pio 5. p. 304.

V. 11 *Give us this day our daily bread.*

The coherence. Hitherto wee have handled the petitions that concerne Gods glorie; now we come to the petitions that concerne our selves as the word *Vs*, doth plainely shew, in these three which follow: and they depend upon the former, as an explication of the manner of our obedience: for there we asked grace to doe Gods will, and here we pray for those blessings and mercies wherein we may expresse our obedience, for we doe Gods will, when we *depend upon his providence* for the blessings of this life: when we *relie upon his mercie*, for the pardon of our sins, and *trust in his power for strength* against temptation and deliverance from evill. Now then to come particularly to this fourth petition: having in the former craved grace to doe Gods will, in our particular callings, here we pray for such sufficiencie of all

A temporall blessings, whereby we may glorifie God therein.

In the handling of this petition, six points are to be considered: 1. what we aske, *Bread*: 2. what bread we aske, *daily bread*: 3. whose bread, *ours*: 4. for what time, *this day*: 5. to whom, *to us*: 6. whence would we have it; by gift from God, *give us*.

For the first: The thing we aske is *Bread*. But what is meant by *Bread*, it is not agreed upon: some expound it spiritually of Christs bodie and bloud, the food of the soule in the Word and Sacraments. But the unfitnesse of this exposition we shall see by the weaknesse of their reasons alleaged for it. First, they say, it is not meet that in so heavenly a prayer, wee should aske so base a thing, as materiall bread of our heavenly father. *Ans.* If God command us to aske him bread, and to depend upon him for it, we must not judge basely of it: now in this a chapter God commands us to depend upon him for food to eat: yea, 1 Pet. 5. 7. we must cast all our care on him: and *Iacobs* practise in praying *for bread to eat*, Gen. 28. 20. and *Agurs* praying for a competencie in outward things, Prov. 30. 8. declare plainely the lawfulnesse thereof. Secondly, (they say) we must first seeke Gods kingdome and his righteousnesse, and then all these things shall be cast upon us, ver. 33. *Ans.* Distrustfull and distracting care is there onely forbidden, but a moderate care is there allowed: and therefore prayer for them is undoubtedly lawfull.

Bread.

• ver 25. 26.

C The second opinion touching Bread is of the Papists, to wit, *That here we aske not onely all necessarie sustenance for the bodie, but much more all spirituall food, namely, the blessed Sacrament, which is Christ the bread of life.* But neither is this so fit: for first, we prayed for spirituall things directly in the second petition. Secondly, Sacramentall bread cannot here bee meant, because it was not ordained when Christ taught his Disciples this prayer. Thirdly, their exposition is against their owne practice: for if by bread were meant Christ in the Sacrament, then the people should be fed therewith every day, which they barre them from.

Rhem. on this place.

The third opinion is, that by bread is meant corporall food and blessings, necessarie to temporall life onely: and this I take to be the truth for these reasons, which also make against the former expositions. First, S. *Luke*, the best interpreter of our Saviour Christ, expounds the words, *of bread that serves for the day*: that is, for every day, Luk. 11. 3. and therfore it must needs be bodily: for spirituall food once truly received serves not for a day, but for ever, Joh. 4. 14. Secondly, this is a perfect platforme of prayer, and therefore must containe petition for temporall blessings, else it were not perfect: now we cannot comprehend our requests for temporall blessings under any other petition but this onely, and therefore Christ here propounded them.

D

What is meant by Bread.

Now

Now properly bread imports that sustenance made of graine which is fit and convenient for mans bodily nourishment, such as *Melchisedek* brought out to *Abraham* and his companie, with wine for their refreshing, Gen. 14. 18. and such is meant in Scripture where bread is opposed to wine or water. But more generally it is taken for all kinde of food whatsoever, whereby life is preserved: in which sence *goats milke is called bread*, Prov. 27.27. and the *fruit of trees*, Jer. 11.19. and all things that passe to and fro in trafficke, Prov. 31.14. Now in this place it must be taken in a generall sense, not onely for bread, but for all other necessarie food, and for raiment also, with health, peace, libertie, and all other things that are meet and needfull for the good outward estate of man, of family, or common-wealth.

1 Vses of covetousnesse.

The vses. 1. In that Christ bids us pray for bread, and not for dainties; hereby he would teach us to beware of covetousnesse, the common sinne of our nature, whereby we are discontent with our estate, and murmure with the Israelites, if we have no more but Manna: but we must strive against this corruption, and say with *David*, *Lord, incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousnesse*, Psalm. 119.36.

3 Learne sobrietie.

Secondly, we must also hereby learne to practise sobriety and moderation in diet, apparell, and all other things appertaining to this life, using them so as we may be the fitter for our callings, and the service of God, and so bettered thereby and not made worse.

3 Contentation.

Thirdly, this must teach us contentation with that place and state of life, and measure of wealth which God gives us: for we must aske bread onely, that is, things necessarie, and therefore if God gives us things necessarie, we must be therewith content: and our corrupt minde must not be judge herein, but what God bestowes upon our sober use of lawfull meanes within our calling, that must we judge to bee our portion: 1 Tim. 6. 8. *If we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content.* This was *Pauls* practice, *I can be abased, & I can abound: everywhere in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungrie, to abound and to have want.* The [a] *Israelites* in the wildernes were not content with Manna, but would needs have flesh to eat, and God gave them their desire; but *while the flesh was in their mouths, his wrath fell upon them*: therefore let us iust after no more than God gives upon our sober use of lawfull meanes, least in seeking more, we draw Gods curse upon us. But alas, few are content with their estate, the yeoman will be like the gentleman in attire and diet; and the gentleman like the noble man; & hence comes usurie, oppression, injustice, and much ungodlinesse; hence it comes that Gods judgement in dearth is increased upon the poore, because men make no conscience of the meanes, so they may benefit and inrich themselves, and get aloft: but

Phil. 4. 12.

a Numb. 11. 31, 33.

A beware of Gods curse with thine advancement; unlesse God change thine estate, rest contented with that which is present, and be thankfull for it: *for better is a little with the feare of God, than great treasure and trouble therewith*, Prov. 15.16. now what trouble like the wrath of God? and therefore be content with that which God sendeth in the use of lawfull meanes.

4 Chance confuted.

Fourthly, must we aske of God every bit of bread we eat? then away with all chance and fortune, and let us learne to acknowledge Gods providence in all things.

5 Merit confuted.

Fifthly, must Gods children aske of God their daily food, and receive it as a gift of mercie from the hands of their father? then away with merit by mans workes: for if bread be of mercie, life everlasting cannot be of merit on mans part.

B

6

Lastly, this petition ministreth unto us a notable ground of contentation against distrustfull care: for that which Christ bids us aske, God undoubtedly will give, because it is according to his will: and therefore the childe of God may assure himselfe of things sufficient for this life, in the sober use of lawfull meanes; and looke, if temporall blessings faile, for a good supply in spirituall graces.

Of asking Gods creatures to our delight.

Here a question may be asked, seeing wee aske of God but bread onely, that is, things necessarie for this life, whether may wee use the creatures of God for our delight? *Answ.* We may use the outward blessings of God for our honest delight: Eccles. 5. 17. *Behold what I have seene good, that it is comelyte eat, and drink, and to take pleasure in all his labour wherein man travelleth under the sunne*: yet three caveats must bee remembred lest wee abuse our libertie in this delight: I. we must see God to give us not onely things necessarie, but for delight: II. in our delight and pleasure we must so moderate our affections, that they be not taken up with these earthly things, nor hereby withdrawne or hindred from things heavenly and spirituall: III. Our principall joy must be in spirituall food, even in Christ crucified, and in our true communion with him in his bodie and bloud: all our delight must stoope to this, and out of Christ wee must count nothing joyous.

C

Eccles. 5. 17.

D

Bread.

II. *Point.* What bread: *daily bread.* The word in the originall signifieth *bread put to our substances* day by day: that is, such bread as serves to preserve health and life from day to day: this *Agur* calls *bread or food convenient for him*, Prov. 30. 8.

We may pray for temporall blessings.

The Vse. In this second point we learne two things: First, that it is lawfull to aske temporall blessings at the hands of God, for he is our mercifull father, and bids us so to doe; which serveth to confirme the former exposition of this article. Secondly, that we ought to have a moderate care to preserve our bodily life and health, in the diligent use of all lawfull meanes: for what we pray for, wee must endeavour to

A moderate care for temporall things lawfull.

doe.

doe. The fifth commandement saith, Thou shalt not kill; wherein the Lord injoineth us by all good meanes to preserve our owne and our neighbours life. And this we must doe for two causes especially: first, that we may doe all the good we can to the Church, Common-wealth, and family whereof we are members: secondly, that wee may have a sufficient time to prepare our selves for heaven: for death will come, and the day of judgment; and after death *there is no wisdome, nor counsel, worke, nor invention*: therefore now must wee prepare our selves for God, that wee may bee ready to receive him at his comming; and he that is prepared for the Lord hath lived well and long enough, but without this our life is spent in vaine.

Eccles. 9. 10.

III. Point. Whose bread doe we pray for? *our owne*, not other mens. But how doth bread or any other temporall blessings become ours? *Answ.* First, when we have true right thereto before God: secondly, when we have lawfull possession thereof before men. Our right before God is needfull, for we lost all in *Adam*, and have recovery of our right in the creatures onely in Christ Jesus, when by faith wee become his members: 1 Cor. 3. 22. *All things are yours and you are Christs.* And yet for all this, the child of God may not use all things as his own though he have right thereto in Christ, unlesse by Gods providence he have also lawfull right thereto or possession thereof before men, as by lawfull gift, purchase, labour, or such like. Indeed right in Christ is the chiefest title, but yet right before men is also necessary: for Christian liberty doth not abolish good orders in civill estates, but establish them rather: Christ is no enemy to *Cæsar*, and therefore the Scripture injoines *every man to eat his owne bread*, 2 Thes. 3. 12. that is, such whereto hee hath right in Christ by faith, and also enjoyeth by Gods providence in some honest meanes allowed of men; for by good orders established among men, we are put into possession of those things whereto we have right in Christ.

How temporall blessings become ours.

B

Enjoy all in Christ.

The vse. I. Here wee learne to receive our bread from God, or any other temporall blessing wee enjoy as a fruit of Christs passion; and indeed Christ crucified is the foundation of every good gift and blessing of God. As for infidels and wicked men, who possesse and tile many temporall blessings, it must bee granted, that they have right thereto before men: but yet having no part in Christ crucified, they want the true foundation, and so are no better than usurpers before God, for which one day they must be called to reckoning. If this point were learned, men should shew more conscience in getting, and more reverence and thankfulnesse in using Gods temporall blessings, than usually they doe: there would bee lesse riot and excesse in diet and attire, and lesse abuse of all Gods creatures: for the meditation of this price of our restitution, would restraine us from dishonouring God in any of his blessings.

II. This petition for our owne bread teacheth us, that every one should have a lawfull calling, and therein so imploy himselfe, that he may eat his owne bread, 1 Thess. 5. 12. No man ought to live out of a lawfull calling, nor yet idlely therein; their is either must be sinfull idlenesse out of his family: and the magistrate out of the common-wealth: a wicked person ought not to be tolerated, for such eat not their owne bread.

A A lawfull calling necessary.

III. Here is condemned all fraud, injustice, and covetoy, in the getting of temporall blessings, for we pray for our owne bread; but that which is so gotten is not our owne, but others: neither will the gamesters gaine, nor that which is got by lottery, stand with this petition: for this is not to labour the thing that good is, as the Apostle requireth, Eph. 4. 28. neither are they sanctified meanes of getting. *Quest.* If this bread be our owne, what need wee to aske it? *Ans.* Wee aske it for good causes though it bee our owne: for in bread there be two things: the substance of bread, and the blessing of God therein, which in Scripture is called [a] *the staffe of bread*, which is that vertue and power therein, whereby it nourisheth: for herein it faeeth with bread, as it doth with an old man; take away his staffe, and he cannot stand but falleth; so take away Gods blessing from bread, and it becomes unprofitable, and nourisheth not. Now because wee may have the substance of bread, and yet want the blessing upon it; wee may have our garners full, and yet bee poore: *we* [b] *may eat and not be satisfied*: fill our bellies, and yet be hungry: therefore wee pray to God for bread, that so wee may have not onely the substance, but the blessing of God therewithall: for which cause Princes must as well make this petition as the poorest beggers.

Thieving condemned.

a Isa. 3. 1.

C

b Hab. 1. 6.

IV. Point. For what time doe wee aske bread? not for a moneth or a yeare, but *for this day*, or as *Luke* hath it, *according to the day*, Luk. 11. 3. that is, meet and convenient for this present day.

The Vse. In this circumstance of time, we are taught: first, to bewaile our distrustfulnesse in Gods providence for temporall blessings, as food, raiment, &c.

D

Secondly, to acknowledge Gods particular providence upon us from day to day, whereon we must depend and cast our selves continually for all things needfull, though we see no reason thereof. Thus did *Abraham*, when he was about to sacrifice his Sonne; for when *Isaac* asked, *where is the sacrifice? Abraham answered; my sonne, God will provide*, Gen. 22.8. and so he did, vers. 13. whereupon *Abraham* in memory of this singular worke of Gods providence, called the name of the place, *Iehovah jireh, God will provide*, v. 14. A most worthy president for every man in the way of obedience, to depend upon Gods providence for all things needfull, endeavouring to see his disposing hand in all things that fall out good or bad.

Thirdly,

Wee must use care for our bodies life.

Thirdly, to moderate our care in seeking for the blessings of this life: wee must have care to provide things honest and necessary; and for this end must exercise our selves in the use of lawfull meanes, otherwise we shall tempt God; but yet our care must be so moderate, that wee still depend upon our heavenly fathers care and providence for us, who bids us aske him bread for every day: and thus we shall have enough, when as distrustfull and immoderate care shall helpe us nothing. When the *Israelites* lived by Manna, which God gave them from heaven, they were commanded to gather but for one day, and to reserve none of it till the morrow; whereby God would teach them to depend upon his daily providence: which while they did, they had sufficient, and that which was good; but when through covetousnesse they would needs gather more than for the day, and so reserved it till the morning, Gods curse light upon it; *for it was full of wormes, and stanke*: and afterward when they began to dislike Manna, and were not content with his providence, but *lusted after flesh, hee gave them their desire, but withall his wrath fell upon them while the flesh was betweene their teeth before it was chewed*, v. 33. and so it will be with us if we distrust in God: but if we learne and practise this dependance on Gods particular providence, we shall have experience of his goodnesse, though ordinary meanes faile, either by supply, as 1 King. 17. 6. or by patience to beare the want.

Exod.16.18,19.

v.20.

Numb.11.4.

Sanctification of our food.

Fourthly, here wee have a good ground of that holy practice of Gods children, sanctifying their meat and drinke by prayer and thanksgiving: for here wee are taught to pray for temporall blessings, and therefore when we have them and use them, we should glorifie God by praier and thanksgiving for his blessing upon them: the reason hereof is great: for first, hereby wee are distinguished from brute beasts, who live upon Gods blessings, but yet cannot praise him as man may doe: secondly, hereby wee testifie our right and interest into Gods creatures by Jesus Christ, which wee lost in *Adam*, for true prayer is a fruit of faith, and by faith wee are made partakers of Christ Jesus: thirdly, such is our corruption by nature, that wee are prone to abuse all Gods blessings, and therefore wee must pray for grace to use them moderately and thankfully.

Fifthly, here we may learne how to frame our daily prayers to God, for this circumstance of time must bee referred to every petition; and therefore this must bee our practice, every day to pray for grace to glorifie Gods name, to yeeld obedience to his will, to have our sinnes forgiven, and so for the rest.

V. Point. For whom doe we aske bread? not for our selves alone, but for our brethren; *Give us*: which serves to teach us brotherly love, which seeketh not her owne things onely, but is bountifull towards others, seeking their good also. And indeed here wee are but stewards of Gods temporall blessings, and therefore may not imploy them as wee will, but for his glory who is our absolute Lord: now his direction is to this effect; that first, we should glorifie God with our temporall goods, imploying them for the maintenance of his worship, and of true religion. Secondly, that we should imploy them for the common good, in the releefe of the poore, and other necessary duties for the common-wealth. Thirdly, that wee should provide for our owne, especially them of our family, that we may live in peace and quietnesse, and so the better prepare our selves for the life to come.

How to glorifie God with our temporall goods.

VI. Point. From whom must wee looke to receive our bread? namely from God: for wee say unto him that is our father in Christ, *Give us*: which teacheth us, that though wee bee his children, and so have right to temporall blessings, yet whatsoever wee have, wee must know it comes from God, and must receive and use it as from his hand. And this we shall doe if wee sanctifie the creatures of God unto our temporall use: for every creature of God is good, if it bee sanctified in his use. Now the creature is sanctified not as man is, when the Spirit of God worketh in him, abolishing corruption and reviving grace; nor yet as the elements in the sacraments are sanctified, which are set apart by God to an holy and spirituall use, to be seales and pledges of grace; but when it is made fit to our temporall civill use, which is done *by the word and prayer*, 1 Tim. 4.4. Where by the *word* is meant; first, *the word of creation*, whereby God in the beginning fitted the creature for mans use, and gave him power and soveraignetie over it: Secondly, *the word of restitution*, whereby after the fall, and after the flood, he granted unto man the use of his creatures, Gen. 9. 3. Thirdly, the *word of the Gospell* concerning our Christian liberty, wherein hee hath inlarged our use in the creatures of God, Acts 10. 15. And by *prayer*, wee desire God to give his power unto the creatures, and his blessing upon them to serve for our good and comfort; as also to give us grace to receive them as from his hand, and to use them to his glory. If wee could learne and practise this duty, wee should have more comfort in the creatures than yet we have; yea, it would restraine us from fraud, oppression, crueltie, and from pride and vanitie in getting and using all Gods blessings: for if wee were perswaded that all temporall blessings came from his hand, how durst wee sinne against him either in getting or using of them.

How the creature is sanctified.

Gen.1.29,30.

Secondly, in that after our labour and diligence in our callings, we must still pray to God to give us bread, we must learne to observe that order of causes which God hath set in the producing of all temporall blessings for this life: for not onely food and rayment, but our labour and diligence there about are secondary causes,

The order of causes in temporall blessings.

causes depending upon the blessings of God, which is the first cause of all disposing and ordering all things unto goodnesse: for it comes from God that meat doth feed us, and cloathes doe keepe us warme. If hee say unto stones, become bread, they shall feed us, Mat. 4.4. yea, in the want of bread hee can preserve strength for many daies, Exod. 34.8. and 1 King. 19.8. yea, if he speake the word, poyson shall become bread and nourish us: but without his blessing nothing can doe us good: Psal. 127.1, 2. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it*: wetherefore must learne to relie upon Gods providence for a blessing on all our labour and studie, and wait for his blessing in all the meanes wee use for our good and comfort: for he is our life, our health, and preservation.

v. 12 *And forgive us our debts, as wee forgive our debters.*

I. The Coherence. Christ having taught us in the former petition to pray for temporall blessings, and for grace to rely upon Gods provident dispensation for the things of this life, doth in this petition and the next, direct us to aske spirituall blessings for our selves, to wit, remission of our sins, and strength against temptation: and the reasons of this order is this; Christ makes the former petition a steppe unto these; for a man must rest upon Gods providence for the preservation of his bodie, that will relie upon his mercy for the salvation of his soule: hee that cannot bee perswaded that God will give him bread, will hardly be resolved that hee will forgive him his sinnes.

Worldlings want faith.

Where first, we may note what is the faith of worldlings: they doe not trust in God for food, rayment, and other temporall blessings; how then can we say that their faith is found for eternall mercies? Isai. 28.16. *Flee that beleeveth will not make haste*, but will stay Gods leasure, waiting for his blessings whereof hee stands in need: But is this the practice of the world? no verily; for let a crosse come, and men will not sticke to use unlawfull meanes for their deliverance: and so they deale, when hope of gaine is offered, making little conscience of fraud, lying, oppression, &c. and so making haste to be rich, they over-reane the provident hand of God, that would lead them by ordinarie lawfull meanes.

Right use of temporall blessings.

Secondly, hence we learne how to enjoy and use all temporall blessings, food, rayment, and such like; namely, as helps and meanes to draw us towards Gods mercy in Christ. Thus did *Jacob*, Gen. 28.20, 21. *If God will be with mee, and give me bread to eat, and clothes to put on.----then shall the Lord be my God*: Joh. 6. 27. Christ bids those *whom he had fed miraculously*, when they sought him afterward for outward things, that *they should not labour for meat which perisheth, rejoyce thereon, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life*; leasing them from bodily care and labour, to that which is heavenly and spirituall.

To come to the petition, wherein wee will handle, first, the necessity of it; then the meaning; and lastly, the uses.

For the first: This petition may seeme to be needlesse; for they that make it are Gods children, who have all their sinnes forgiven them, both past, present, and to come. 1 *Ioh.* This indeed must be the daily petition of all Gods children in this world, and the necessity of it is great; for howsoever in the purpose of God, all sinnes are pardoned to true beleevers; yea, all sinnes past repented of, are to forgiven, that they shall never be againe imputed: yet sinnes present, and to come, are not actually pardoned, till they be repented of. This experience teacheth, for who can feele the assurance of mercy for any sinne committed, before he have repented of it? and though true repentance once had, let us for ever in Gods favour, yet it must bee daily renued for our daily falls, or else we cannot know it to be true. Hence it is, that *Paul* intreats the Saints of God in Corinth (though they had truly repented at their conversion) *to be reconciled unto God*, 2 Corinth. 5.20. meaning, by renuing their repentance. And *David* was the true childe of God, yet being left unto himselfe, hee fell into two grievous sinnes, wherein hee lay almost a whole yeare without repentance; during all which time, he had not pardon of them actually; for *Nathan* rebuked him to bring him to repentance, and upon his confession, pronounced them pardoned: yea, and *David* himselfe afterward, for the fuller assurance of mercy to his soule, most earnestly intreated pardon hereof at the hands of God, Psal. 51. So that this petition is most necessary, as well for actuall pardon of sinnes present, as for the more full assurance of sinnes past.

Why Gods children daily pray for pardon.

The meaning. This petition is propounded in the forme of a comparison, which naturally standeth thus; *As we forgive our debters, so forgive thou to us our debts*: and it hath two parts, a request for pardon, and a reason thereof. Our request for pardon is this; *Forgive us our debts*. In the word *debt* is a figurative kinde of speech taken from bargaining, wherein *God* is resembled to the *Creditor*. *Man* is the *debter*: the *Law* is the *bond or obligation*; and *sinne* is that *debt* of ours, for which we stand bound to God by the Law, this appeares by this, that in the Evangelists the word *sinne* and *debt* are used promiscuously; as Luk. 11. 4. compared with this of Matthew, and Luk. 13. 4. Now sinne makes us debters unto God, not for that we owe it unto him, for wee are bound by the Law to yeeld the contrary obedience; but because upon default of obedience unto God, whereto wee are bound by the Law, wee are

Sinne a debt.

bound for our sinnes unto punishment, which is as it were a second debt. Even as a man that is bound in an obligation to another, through default of performing the condition thereof, is bound to pay both the principall and the forfeiture: the punishment of sinne which is eternall death, being that forfeiture whereto wee stand bound before God, for want of obedience which is as it were the principall.

Remission of sinne not our whole justification.

The consideration of this resemblance for which sinne is called a debt, serves to direct us in some points of religion: as first, it confutes their opinion, who hold that our whole justification consists in the remission of sinnes, and that the same is wrought by the shedding of Christs bloud alone: for we owe to God a double debt, first, obedience, and for default thereof we stand bound to punishment: these two debts are different and distinct one from another, and they must be both paid, and Gods justice satisfied either by our selves or by a surety, before wee can be accepted as righteous unto life: Now wee our selves can discharge neither; therefore Christ our suretie must doe both: and so he hath: for our second debt of sinne whereby we stand bound to punishment, Christ discharged by his death and passion, wherein *he made his soule a sacrifice for sin*; and our debt of obedience in perfect love to God and man, hee also paid to God in fulfilling the law for us: whereupon it is true, [e] *that the righteousnesse of the Law is fulfilled in them which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirit.* But (say they) the Scripture everywhere ascribes our whole redemption and justification to Christs bloud-shedding, and to his death and passion. *Ans.* Christs bloud-shedding must be considered two wayes: first, as a part of his passion, whereby we are discharged from punishment: secondly, as a part of his obedience, wherein he testified singular love both to God his father, and unto mankind: for in suffering he obeyed, and in obeying hee suffered: now because his bloud-shedding is a part of both, therefore is our whole redemption ascribed thereunto, not excluding, but including his actuall obedience therein, it being a part thereof.

e Rom.8.4.

Secondly, debt in this place betokening sinne as it binides unto punishment, sheweth plainely that sinne and punishment goe alwaies together: and therefore the Popish doctrine is false and erroneous which parteth them asunder, by making some sinnes veniall, not deserving the punishment of death, which is the wages of sinne.

Popish error 1 Joh.1. ver.5.

Forgivenesse of sinne described.

Forgive us] This forgivenesse here asked, is a free and full discharge from sinne and the punishment thereof, without any satisfaction on our part: and this God doth, when hee is content for Christs sake, not to impute sinne unto us, but to account it as not committed, and the punishment thereof as not due unto us; being fully and freely contented with the all-sufficient satisfaction made by Christ in his death and passion. This forgivenesse *Hezekiah* expressed, when he said to God, [d] *Thou hast cast all our sinnes behinde thy backe*: and *Michah*, saying, [e] *He will subdue our iniquities, and cast all our sinnes into the bottome of the sea.* So that our request to God is this, that *whereas our sins binde us unto punishment, the Lord would be pleased for his Sonnes sake, freely to remit all our sinnes, and never to impute them unto us, and to be fully contented with the suffering of Christ, that the punishment of our sinnes be never laid upon us.*

d Isa.38.17.

e Mich.7.19.

Quest. But of what sinnes doe we here aske pardon? *Ans.* Both of sinnes past and present: for howsoever the child of God hath his sinnes past fully pardoned at once on Gods part, upon his true repentance; yet hee is not able so to receive pardon as God gives it, but must receive it by little and little, and as it were drop by drop: this we may see in *David*, who had the pardon of his sin pronounced by [f] *Nathan* the Prophet; and yet after that he penned the 51. Psal. wherein hee begs mercy and forgivenesse most earnestly for that sinne which God had already pardoned, ayming no doubt at a more full and comfortable assurance of Gods pardon in his owne heart: for this cause also in his old age he prayes for the pardon of the sinnes of his youth, Psal. 25. 7. Againe, here wee pray for the pardon of sinnes present, both that they may bee actually forgiven: and also that our hearts and consciences may be settled in the assurance thereof.

f 2 Sam.12.13.

The uses. First, by this petition, we are taught to bewayle our carnall security; for naturally we goe on from day to day, in following the pleasures and profits of this world, and never thinke of our debt to God by sinne, till the evill day of death or distresse approach unto us; like to desperate bankrupts that never regard their debt, till the Serjeant be upon their backe. This is that sin which Christ foretold should reigne in the latter dayes, Matth. 24.39. and I appeale to the conscience in the view of all estates and conditions, whether it be not so: for though iniquity dee abound, yet no man saith, *what have I done?* Jer.8.6. yea, this is the sinne of many professors, for the nature of man is prone to incroach upon Gods favour. But wee must know, that this security cannot stand with this petition: for here we are taught to call to minde our sinnes, every day praying for the pardon of them.

Wants to be bewailed. Security in sinne.

Secondly, here we see whereon we must rely and settle our hearts in all estates, in affliction, temptation, and death itselfe; namely, on the meere mercy of God in Christ, by faith in his bloud for the pardon of our sinnes. Looke to the prayers of all the Saints of God in Scriptures, and wee shall finde that they made this their rocke, and anchor of stay in all distresse, Dan.9.18,19. *O Lord, heare and behold,---- not for our owne righteousnesse, but for thy great tender mercies: deferre not, for thy owne sake, oh my*

Our rest in distresse.

my God. This wee must observe to arme us against the damnable doctrine of the Church of Rome, for they will grant that in his first conversion a man must rely onely on Gods mercy in Christs bloud; but after a man is made the childe of God, he may rest upon his owne good merits, so it be in modesty and sobriety. But this is the right way to hell, flat against this petition: for how can wee dreame of any merit, when as wee must every day aske mercy and forgivenesse? for to aske mercy, and to plead merit, are contraries: now by our daily sinnes we adde debt to debt, and so must still plead mercy and not merit, even after wee are converted and sanctified; ever praising God that hath delivered us from the slavish bondage of that; so did Zacharyas.

Bellarm de justif. l.5.c.17.

Daily humiliation.

Thirdly, here we see what wee must doe in respect of our daily sinnes whereunto wee fall; wee must not lie in them, but repent our estate by true humiliation and repentance. Also if thou be crossed in the things of this world, the way of comfort and deliverance is to be learned here: for as thou doest daily aske bread, so thou must aske forgivenesse for thy sinnes: and when they are pardoned, thou hast title and interest to all Gods blessings. Now this daily humiliation stands in three things: 1. in examination of our selves for our debt unto God by sinne: 2. in confessing our debt unto our creditour, yeelding our selves into his hands: 3. in humbling our selves unto him, craving pardon and remission earnestly for Christs sake, as for life and death: herein the children of God are presidents unto us: Psal. 32. 5, 6. *David* in great distresse found no releasse while hee held his tongue, but when he humbled himselfe, and *confessed against himselfe*, then he found mercy and ease: whereupon he professeth that he will be a patterne to every godly man for their behaviour in the time of distresse.

Remedy against despaire.

Fourthly, here wee have a notable remedie against despaire, wherewith the devill assaults many a childe of God, when through infirmitie they fall into some grievous sinne, or commit the same sinne often, which greatly wounds the conscience: for here Christ bids us aske forgivenesse of our daily sinnes whatsoever they be, or how often soever committed. And no doubt, he that bids us forgive our brethren that sinne against us, though it were *seven times in a day, if they seek it at our hands*, will much more forgive us. This must not embolden any to sinne presumptuously, for the Lord hath said, *He will not be merciful unto that man*, Deut. 29.19. but if any fall through infirmity, hereon hee hath to stay himselfe from despaire.

2 Chr.19.2.

No man can fulfillthe Law.

Fifthly, hereby wee see that no man possibly can fulfill the Law, for the Apostles themselves were commanded to aske pardon of sinne every day: whereby it is plaine they could never fulfill the Law, and therefore much lesse can any other.

Sixthly, that which we pray for we must in all godly manner endeavour after. And therefore as we pray for pardon of sinne every day, so must wee daily use the meanes wherein God gives assurance of remission to his children; as heare the Word, receive the Sacraments, and pray unto God publikely and privately: endeavouring to resist all temptations, and to glorifie God by new obedience: for it is grosse hypocrisie to aske the pardon of sinne, and still to live in the practise of it.

Sermon to get pardon.

Lastly, here we see we must pray not only for the pardon of our own sins, but of our brethrens also; *Forgive us*: whereby Christ would teach us to be carefull of the salvation of our brethren and neighbours; the good estate of their soules should be deare and precious unto us: and if this were so, happy would it bee with the Church of God; but alas, men are so farre from care of the salvation of their neighbours, that men of the same family are careless of one anothers soules; masters regard not their servants, nor parents their children: indeed, they will provide for their bodies and outward estate, but for their soules they have no care: wherein they bewray themselves to be cruell and merciless, having more care of their hogs and bruit beasts, than of their children and servants: for when their hogges have all needfull provision, their children and servants soules shall want instruction.

Wee ought be carefull of the salvation of others.

As wee also forgive our debtors] These words are here propounded as a condition of the former petition; and they include a reason thereof, as Luk. 11.4. *Forgive us our sinnes,* FOR *even we forgive every man that is indebted unto us.* And this Christ addeth for weightie causes, even to crosse the fraud and hypocrisie of our corrupt hearts, who would have forgivenesse of God, and yet would not forgive our brethren, nor yet leave off the practice of sinne our selves. But this condition imports, that wee must exercise mercy towards our brethren, and so breake off the course of our sinnes, if we looke for mercy at Gods hands. Now the words here used are comparative, betokening a likelihood and similitude betweene Gods forgiving and ours: which must bee rightly understood, because our forgivenesse is mingled with much corruption through want of mercy: and therefore we must not understand it of the measure of forgivenesse, not yet of the manner simply, but especially of the very act of forgiving, for thereto sometimes must similitudes be restrained; as Mat.9.29. *According to your faith be it unto you.* And the force of the reason stands in the circumstance, thus; If wee who have but a drop of mercy, doe forgive others; then doe thou who art the fountaine of mercies forgive us: but wee forgive others; therefore doe thou forgive us.

Reason to get pardon.

Touching our forgiving others, three questions must be examined: 1. How can any man pardon a trespasse, seeing God onely forgiveth sinnes? *Ans.* In every trespasse which one doth

to his neighbour, be two things: the loſſe and dammage whereby man is hindered in body, goods, or name: and an offence againſt God, by a practice of injuſtice againſt his law. Now as a treſpaſſe is a dammage unto man, ſo may a man forgive it; but as it is a ſinne againſt God in the tranſgreſſion of the morall law, ſo God only pardons it: as when a man hath his goods ſtolen, that dammage done to him a man may remit; but the breach of the eighth commandement therein, God onely can forgive.

How farre we are bound to forgive.

I. Queſt. How farre is a man bound to forgive others that treſpaſſe againſt him? *Anſw.* There is a threefold forgiveneſſe; of *revenge*, of *puniſhment*, and of *judgement*. *Forgiveneſſe of revenge* is when a man is not deſirous of revenge from an unward grudge, but forbeares to render like for like to thoſe that wrong him: this is principally here meant; for we muſt [a] *alwaies forgive our brethren*, in reſpect of revenge; *for vengeance is mine, ſaith the Lord, and I will repay*, Rom. 12. 19. *Forgiveneſſe of puniſhment* is the remitting of that puniſhment which another mans wrong-doing juſtly deſerves: this is not alwayes to be granted, eſpecially in the caſe of offence, which may tend to the publike hurt: for then were the ſtate of magiſtracy unlawfull, whoſe office it is to puniſh offences. The *forgiveneſſe of judgement* is the remitting of that cenſure which an evill deed doth juſtly deſerve; neither is this here meant, for being lawfully called thereunto, wee may freely cenſure that which is evill done.

[a] Mark. 11. 25.

How we muſt forgive the obſtinate.

III. Queſt. Whether muſt wee forgive thoſe that wrong us, if they will not confeſſe their fault, nor aske us forgiveneſſe? *Anſ.* We muſt forgive them freely, in reſpect of revenge. *Obj.* 8. But it is ſaid, *If he repent, forgive him*, Luk. 17. 3. therefore, unleſſe he repent, we need not to forgive him? *Anſ.* That place is meant of Eccleſiaſticall cenſures, that thoſe muſt proceed no further, after the party offending doth repent.

How we become debtors againſt our neighbours.

Debtors] Hereby is not meant ſuch as wee count debtors in the civill ſtate; that is, ſuch as owe us money, graine, &c. but any one that doth us injury, or wrong: for no mans eſtate is ſo low, but in ſome degree God hath given one or moe of theſe ſome things; honour, life, goods, or good name; and he that hinders his neighbour in any of theſe, is a debtor before God, and ſo ſtandeth, till he make recompence to the party, and repent towards God: yea, further, wee muſt know that beſides the endammaging of our neighbour in theſe things, the very omiſſion of preſerving and furthering our neighbours life, honour, goods, and good name, makes us alſo debtors before God.

These words thus underſtood, muſt be conceived as a reaſon drawne, not from the cauſe, or like example, but from the ſigne and pledge of Gods forgiveneſſe; for God hath made a promiſe to forgive us, if wee forgive our brethren their treſpaſſes, Mark. 11. 25. from whence merciſull men may gather aſſurance of pardon with God, from that inclination to compaſſion and readineſſe, which they finde in their own hearts, to forgive others that wrong them: for Chriſt teacheth them to reaſon thus; If wee be thoſe to whom thou haſt promiſed pardon when they aske it, then Lord pardon us: but wee are ſuch, for wee feele our hearts inclined to mercy; therefore Lord pardon us. So that this reaſon ſerves to move us to pray to God for pardon with confidence and aſſurance: yea, further, they include a profeſſion to God of new obedience in amendment of life; for under one duty of mercy towards our neighbour, is comprehended the whole practice of repentance, and the performance of our vow made in baptiſme.

Vſes. I. Marke here, that asking pardon of God, and teſtimony of repentance, goe together: he that receives the one, muſt expreſſe the other: for where God gives pardon, there alſo hee gives grace to repent, and mercy is not granted, but on condition of repentance, Act. 1. 37, 38. when the Jewes that were pricked in conſcience at *Peters* Sermon, aſked *what to doe to find mercy*; *Peter* ſaid, *Amend your lives, &c.* And therefore when hee perceived want of repentance in *Simon Magus*, he tels him, [b] *Thou art yet in the gall of bitterneſſe, and in the bond of iniquity*, though he had formerly baptized him. Whereby wee ſee, First, with what affection we muſt come to God, when we pray for the pardon of our ſinnes: namely, with humble and contrite hearts, having a true purpoſe not to ſinne wittingly, and willingly, but to obey God in all his commandements: and the want of this, is the cauſe of that ſmall comfort in prayer, which many finde in themſelves: for the promiſe of pardon is not given, where the condition of repentance is not performed. Secondly, this ſhewes the groſſe and fearefull error of the blind world, who ſing this ſong while they live in ſinne, to their owne hearts; *God is merciſull: Chriſt is a Saviour*: but thus truſting to Gods mercy they deceive themſelves, for they truſt to nothing; for mercy is not due, where repentance is wanting: nay, the Lord hath ſaid, [c] *Hee will not be merciſull to that man that ſhall bleſſe himſelfe in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace though I walke after the ſtubbornneſſe of mine owne heart, &c.* Let us therfore see to this, that we practiſe repentance, when we pray for pardon; and looke to the purpoſe of our heart againſt ſinne, when wee wait for mercy to our ſoules. Wee may not ſever thoſe things which God hath joyned, but looke how heartily wee deſire mercy, ſo earneſtly muſt we hunger after grace to repent: if wee truly ſeeke both, wee ſhall have both; but if we let ſlip repentance in our ſelves, wee ſhall come ſhort of mercy with the Lord.

Remiſſion and repentance goe together.

[b] Act. 8. 23. v. 13.

[c] Deut. 29. 19, 20.

II. The joyning of this condition, implying repentance, to the petition, and the dependance of it on the former, teacheth us every day to

to renew our repentance, and to humble our ſelves for our ſinnes, ſeeking for a new ſupply of grace, that ſo our purpoſe not to ſinne, may bee more and more confirmed in our hearts, which is the infallible ſigne of a new creature.

The practice of true repentance.

III. Here wee ſee wherein the practice of true repentance ſtandeth; namely, in exerciſing mercy, love, peace, reconciliation, and forgiveneſſe: for though forgiveneſſe be onely named, yet under it all other fruits of repentance are underſtood. Indeed to heare the Word, to receive the Sacrament, to preach and pray, be excellent workes; but yet the heart of man may more eaſily diſſemble in them, than in the duties of the ſecond table: the moſt infallible marke of true grace is the practice of the love of God in works of love and mercy to our brethren: Jam. 1. 27. *Pure religion and undefiled before God, is to viſit the fatherleſſe, &c.* Jam. 3. 17. *The wiſdome that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, eaſie to bee intreated, full of mercie and good fruits.* And hence it is that *love is called the fulfilling of the law*, Rom. 13. 10.

A true ſigne of pardon of ſinne.

IV. Chriſt knitting our forgiving our brother with Gods forgiving us, doth here afford unto us a notable ſigne of pardon of ſinne; namely, a ready and willing minde to forgive our brother offending us: our inclination to mercie in ſtuppreſſing the deſire of revenge when we are wronged, gives aſſurance to our conſcience that wee ſhall finde mercy at Gods hands: whereby it is plaine, that the childe of God may know his owne eſtate before God, in regard of his mercy in Chriſt, even by deſcending into his owne heart, and there finding the affection of mercy, in forgiving thoſe that have wronged him: and this we muſt labour for, if we would know Gods mercy in Chriſt to belong unto us.

Deſire of revenge muſt be avoyded.

V. Hereby wee are admoniſhed to beware in our ſelves, of the common ſin of this age, ingrafted in our nature; to wit, deſire of revenge, ſpite, and grudging upon every occaſion: for when we pray unto God with ſuch malicious hearts, we doe in effect deſire the Lord to exerciſe his wrath, and to revenge his juſtice on us. And undoubtedly, many a man doth fearefully curſe himſelfe in his owne prayers, while hee is cruelly minded towards his brethren; and God ofentimes ſaith *Amen* to ſuch curſes moſt deſervedly, ſeeing men are ſo cruell to their owne ſoules, to curſe themſelves: and therefore wee had need to looke to our hearts when wee pray to God, that we forgive men, if wee would be forgiven of God.

When we ought to ſeeke reconciliation with our brethren.

VI. Here note a generall groſſe ſinne in this age: moſt men will ſeeke to be reconciled to their brethren, with whom they are at variance, when they come to the Lords table: but at all other times they take their pleaſure, thinking they may well enough performe all other duties of religion, though they retaine malice and enmity towards their brethren. But here we may obſerve, that we ought to be reconciled with our brethren, whenſoever wee goe to God in prayer: for elſe, if we come in malice and envy towards our brethren, we curſe our ſelves and ſinne againſt our owne ſoules. In prayer we bring the ſacrifice of our hearts, and the calves of our lips unto God; but before wee offer it, we muſt *reconcile our ſelves unto our brethren*, as we heard before.

[a] Chap. 5. 23, 24. Are reconciled to God.

VII. Here alſo we may ſee the groſſe hypocriſie of our nature: for ſo oft as we make this petition, we make profeſſion of reformation of life in new obedience, (for this one branch of brotherly reconciliation here profeſſed, doth preſuppoſe our converſion from all ſinne, ſith that true repentance for our ſinne, cannot ſtand with a purpoſe to live in any other.) And yet behold, though many ſay this prayer often, yet ſtill they continue in their old ſinnes as in blaſphemy, drunkenneſſe, whoredome, oppreſſion, lying, fraud, &c. as though it were nothing to offende with God: but God is not mocked, either amend thy wicked converſation, or leave off to make this holy profeſſion.

Mercie cruelty.

VIII. In that Chriſt tieth our duty of forgiving our brethren, to ſo weighty a condition, as is our forgiveneſſe with God; hereby he would acquaint us with the horrible cruelty of our nature, and proneneſſe to revenge: we muſt therfore take notice of it, and labour to ſee and to bewaile this corruption of our hearts: and on the other ſide, to hunger after love, mercie, gentleneſſe, meekneſſe, and to endevour to practiſe the ſame continually.

How to get and keepe perfect conſcience.

Laſtly, joyne both parts of this petition together, and they ſhew us a way how to keepe true peace of conſcience for ever; namely, First, wee muſt call upon God for the pardon of our ſinnes every day. Secondly, we muſt follow after peace with men, in the practice of forgiveneſſe and reconciliation when offences grow; for when we are at one with God and man, we have a bleſſed peace: and hence will follow peace in our owne hearts, which is that peace which the world cannot give; which while we retaine, wee need not to feare any evill, no not death itſelfe: for if God be with us, who can be againſt us?

V. 13 *And lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evill.*

Coherence.

These words containe the ſixth and laſt petition, which is not needleſſe, as ſome may think, but for weighty cauſes ſet after all the former, though a man had the fruition of all the graces there deſired: to wit, First, to teach us who they bee that are moſt troubled with temptations: namely, the children of God, that for themſelves to ſo be his glory, to advance his kingdome, to doe his will, to depend upon his providence, and to relie upon his mercie for the pardon of their ſinnes; theſe of all others are moſt ſubject to temptation; for

God's children moſt tempted.

being escaped out of the Devils snare, hee bestirres himselfe by all possible meanes to bring them in againe: grievous temptations doe alwayes accompany remission of sinne, which is joyned with endevour to glorifie God, as both the Word of God, and Christian experience doe fully witnesse: which must bee well observed, both to stay the minde of those that are deeply humbled through Saints temptations, thinking that they are not the children of God, because they are so troubled with sinne and Satan, when as the case is cleane contrary: for spirituall temptations, if they bee resisted with godly sorrow, are rather a signe of Gods love, because the devils hatred is most toward them whom God loves best; and on whom God shewes mercy, towards them will the devill exercise his malice. As also this discovereth the folly of those, that sooth up themselves in this fond conceit, that God surely loves them, and they are deepe in his favour, because they are freed from temptations; when as indeed they ought rather to suspect themselves to be under the power of Satan: *for when the strong man armed keeps the hold, the things that he possesseth are in peace*, Luk. 11. 21. whereby is signified, that the wicked of the world being possessed of Satan, are at peace in themselves, in regard of temptations: for what needs hee to trouble them which are already at his command? but let them beginne to repent, and to seeke mercy for their sinnes, with endevour to leave them, and they shall soone finde that Gods favour is not enjoyed without the devils malice.

Watchfulnesse against sinne.

Secondly, this petition is joyned with the former, to teach us, that as we must be carefull to begge mercy and pardon for our sinnes already past, so we must be watchfull to prevent sinnes to come: he that saith, *Forgive us our trespasses*, must pray also, *not to be led into temptation*: and therefore as we would not have our consciences pricked with the sting of our old sinnes, so wee must be carefull we fall not into them againe, neither bee overcome with new temptations.

The meaning. The words themselves containe one onely petition, (though some have thought otherwise) consisting of two parts: the first is the petition itselfe, *And lead us not into temptation*: the second, is the exposition thereof, *But deliver us from evill*: for in effect it is thus much, *That wee be not led into temptation, deliver us from evill.*

Temptations two-fold.

For the first, that we may rightly understand it, we must search out two things: First, what a temptation is: Secondly, what it is to be led into temptation. There be two sorts of temptations, Good, and Evill. I call that *a good and holy temptation*, when as God tempts a man, and it is an action of God whereby he proveth and trieth man, to make manifest unto man himselfe and unto others, what is in his heart: for God knoweth well enough before

1. Good.

A he trie him. Thus he tempted *Abraham* by the offering of his sonne, Gen. 22. 1, 2. and the Israelites, *by sending false prophets among them*. Deu. 13. 3. And in this sense *afflictions* are called *temptations*, Jam. 1. 2. because God trieth man by affliction, as gold is tried in the fire: and all these are good, both in respect of the author, which is God, and of the end, which is the good of his servants: Job 23. 10. *He knoweth my way and trieth me, and I shall come forth as the gold.* An *evill temptation* is a wicked motion, allurement, or persuasion, whereby man is provoked to sin against God in the transgression of some commandement. *Example.* When a man is in distresse, he shall finde provocations to impatience, distrust, and murmuring against B God: as also to use unlawfull meanes to helpe himselfe: and in prosperity he shall finde sundry allurements to presume upon Gods mercie in some evill course, to neglect the ordinarie meanes of grace and salvation; as the Word, Prayer, &c. all these and such like, are evill motions, arising partly from our owne corruption, and partly from the suggestion of the devill, who by himselfe, and by his instruments, thus seekes to draw men from their duty to God: and these evill temptations be they, which in this petition we pray against.

2. Evill.

II. Point. What is it to be led into temptation? *Ans.* A man is led or carried (as the word imports) into temptation, when the temptation possesseth him, and holds him after C it hath assaulted him: for we must know that in every temptation there be two actions; one of God, whereby in his just judgement he leaves a man to himselfe, or to the malice of Satan: another, of man himselfe, whereby being left of God, hee enters into the middest of the temptation, as it were plunging himselfe into it. For the better conceiving hereof, we must know that a temptation hath foure degrees, by which it proceedeth, till it bring a man unto destruction, unlesse it be cut off; to wit, *Suggestion, Delight, Consent* and *Perfection*, Jam. 1. 14, 15. *Suggestion* is when the minde conceiveth a wicked thought, put in by Satan, or arising from naturall corruption: *Delight* is when the evill thought conceived, and for a time retained in the minde, descendeth to the heart, and there pleaseth the will, and delighteth the D affections: *Consent* is when the will yeelds to the evill motion, and the heart resolves to practise it: *Perfection* is when a sinne is often committed, and by custome becomes as it were ripe, whereupon followes destruction. Now in the first and second of these degrees, a man is said to be tempted onely: for suggestion and delectation doe not defile the heart, but when the will consents, then the temptation takes hold upon him, and possesseth him: and by often practice he is plunged into it, intangled and intrapped, and held captive under it. Now then (to apply this to the point in hand) a man is led into temptation, when hee is left of God to

To be led into temptation.

Foure degrees in temptation.

to an evill motion suggested into his minde, so A as hee gives consent unto it, and goes on to the practice of it. See this in *Judas*, Joh. 13. 2. Satan cast this evill motion into his heart, *Judas betray thy master*: this he thought upon, and was delighted with the gaine that he hoped to reape thereby: and here God left him to himselfe for his hypocrisie and other sinnes, and then Satan entred into his heart, got consent of will, and so carried him to the practice of this treason. Hereto also the Apostle seemes to allude, 1 Tim. 6. 9. *They that will be rich fall into temptations and snares*, being left of God to their corruption in covetousnesse.

Whether Gods children be led into temptation.

But some will say, that Gods owne children have beene thus carried into temptation; as *David* in the case of his adultery and murther, 2 Sam. 11. and *Peter* in denying his master, Matth. 26. 70, 74. *Answ.* It may seeme they were carried into temptation, for their evill motions were not onely received with delight, but consented unto and practised: yea, *David* lay in his sinne almost a whole yeare. But wee must consider, that they were the children of God by adoption and regeneration, and therefore howsoever God left them to be tempted, yet he forsooke them not wholly or finally, but still loved them, so as they were not carried into temptation with full consent of heart: but Gods saving grace remained in them, which when God stirred up, they were recovered by B repentance. Indeed they went as farre as they could, and in regard of themselves, farre enough to have cut off their salvation; but that was laid up with God in Christ, for his *foundation remaineth sure*, and *whom he loves, he loves to the end, his gifts and calling are without repentance*. So then, to be led into temptation is to be carried into it with full consent, being left of God unto the malice of Satan, and the powerfull working of a mans owne corruptions: and Christs meaning is, as if he had taught us to say thus; *O Lord, we are every way subject to temptations, and by our sins we deserve to be left, therein, to the malice of Satan, and to the power of our owne corruptions, yet we beseech thee not to forsake us in any temptation, but give an happy issue thereto, still upholding us by thy grace.*

How God leads into temptation.

Quest. How can God lead a man into temptation, and yet not bee the author of sinne? C *Ans.* Well enough: for as temptation is a punishment of sinne, so God may lead a man into it by permission, leaving the party to himselfe, and Satans malice, for some former transgression. Againe, God never puts any evill motion into the minde, but yet hee suffers Satan to doe it; and though the devill be a most wicked instrument, yet such is Gods power and wisdome, that he can use him without sinne, in a good manner, and to a good end.

Bellarm. de justif. l. 3. c. 13.

Vses. 1. This petition serves to confute a grosse error of the Papists, who teach that a man truly justified before God, may finally fall from grace, and bee condemned: as also D the opinion of some Protestants, who though they will not say that the childe of God may finally fall away and perish, yet they hold that hee may wholly fall away for a time, and that every grievous sinne which hee commits, curs him off totally, till hee doe repent; for looke what the childe of God asketh in prayer, according to Gods will, that shall be granted him: but in this petition he asketh perseverance from totall and finall apostasie, and that according to Gods will, by the teaching of Christ himselfe, *Lead us not into temptation*: and therefore it shall be granted. Indeed it stands with the will of God, and the good of his children, that sometime they should be buffeted by Satan in temptation: and therefore we pray not here to be freed from all assaults, but that wee bee not wholly left unto our selves, nor forsaken of God, but so preserved by his grace, that we be not swallowed up in temptation: and this petition being according to Gods will, shall be granted to him that askes in faith, 1 Joh. 5. 14. And hence it is, that he that is once the child of God indeed, shall so remaine for ever, and cannot finally or totally fall away from grace. *David's* fall and *Peters* were great and fearefull, but yet therein, they were not wholly forsaken of God, unlesse it were in their owne feeling for a time.

The child of God cannot wholly fall from grace.

Object. But *David* by his two sins became guilty of Gods wrath, and so lost his right of this prerogative in being the childe of God. C *Answ.* If we consider the desert of those sinnes, that undoubtedly should have beene his estate; but yet in regard of Gods election and free grace of adoption, wherein God changeth not, as also in regard of the inward seeds of Gods grace in his heart, he remained still the child of God, though the signes of Gods favour were changed into the signes of his anger and displeasure. *Ob.* But by such sinnes a man loseth the graces which formerly he had. *Answ.* The graces of God in man are of two sorts; some are necessary to salvation, as faith, hope, and charitie, without which no man can be saved: others be very excellent and profitable, but not of like necessity with the former; as the sense and feeling of Gods love and favour, peace of D conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, alacrity in prayer, courage and boldnesse with God: and these latter may bee lost, but the necessarie graces cannot, howsoever they may be greatly weakned; for so it was with *David*, by his fall he lost for a time the feeling of Gods favour, the joy of the Spirit, &c. but faith, hope, and love, were not extinguished, but sore weakned and covered, as fire in the ashes.

2. *Vse. Wants to be bewailed.*

Here also wee are taught to mourne for the corruption of our nature, whereby we are prone to yeeld up our selves to every temptation of sinne and Satan, and be slacke and negligent in resisting: wee doe not watch and pray against temptations diligently, nor shunne the occasi-

ons

ons of sinne, as we ought to dee: nay, we offer our selves into temptation, and minister occasion unto Satan, and to our owne corruption to assault us often. This we shall finde to be true in our selves, if wee search out thorowly our owne estate; and therefore it should grieve our hearts when wee feele the law of our members rebelling against the law of our minds, and leading us captive unto sinne.

2. Vse. Grace to be desired.

Grace helping against temptation.

Here also wee must learne to desire of God all such graces as may helpe us against temptation, and they are many: I. Spirituall heed and watchfulnes to prevent temptations, and to avoid the occasions thereof. II. Grace to pray in the time of temptation, that God would lessen and moderate the violence and force thereof. III. That in temptation God would be so farre from withdrawing his grace from us, that hee would then adde grace to grace, even new grace unto the former. IV. That in the continuance of temptation, when it abideth long upon us, God would strengthen us to hold out. V. That he would give us patience to beare the irksomnesse and burthen of it. VI. That in the end of it, God would give a comfortable issue, for his glorie, and our owne good.

4. *Vse.* Here also we are let to see, how great our weaknesse is, even when wee bee Gods children, and have true grace; for wee must daily pray *that God would not lead us into temptation*: whereby we import, that of our selves wee are so farre from withstanding a temptation, that if God should leave us; wee would give up our selves as slaves unto the Devill. Here then behold thine estate and condition whosoever thou art, considered in thy selfe: if God leave thee, thou canst not stand in any temptation, but must needs fall into the bordage of Satan: yea, its exceeding great is our weaknesse in our selves, that in temptation there doth scarce appeare any difference betweene the child of God and a wicked one; for both are subject to the temptation of Satan: nay, the childe of God is usually more assaulted than the wicked: when the evill motion ariseth, or is suggested into the minde, the wicked receive it, and delight therein: so did *David*, and so dee we all: the wicked give consent of will, so doe the godly; if God leave them: the wicked fall to practise sinne, and so doe the godly, if God keepe backe his grace from them: the wicked lye in sinne, and so doe the godly, till the Lord by grace doe raise them up. Where then is the difference? Surely the persons themselves doe differ in temptation, for the wicked is carried with violence into sinne, and without resistance in temptation: but the godly hath some resistance in himselfe; when hee gives consent to sinne, the evill that hee doth, hee would not doe; Rom. 7. 19. But the maine difference is Gods grace and mercie, vouchsafed to the childe of God, but denied to the wicked; for if wee escape temptation, it is of grace and mercie; if wee stand in temptation, and yeeld not to evill suggestion, if wee deny consent of will, or bee kept from the practice of sinne, it is all of grace: and if we be fallen into sinne, and rise againe by true repentance, that also is Gods speciall grace, without which undoubtedly wee should runne on with the wicked unto destruction. Here therefore wee must learne to renounce all confidence in our selves, and to walke in all humilitie before God, relying wholly upon his grace and mercie in Jesus Christ: we must make his arme our strength, and his grace our shield, to defend us from temptation. This was *David's* practice, who in all trouble and distresse had recourse to God, calling him, *his hope, for rest, and deliverer*, Psal. 91. 2, 3. his *secret or hiding place, who preserveth him from troubles, and compasseth him about with joyfull deliverance*. Psal. 32. 7. and when his enemies increased, yet the Lord was *his buckler, his glorie, and the lifter up of his head*, Psal. 3. 2, 3. And thus should we rest upon God, considering that if wee receive a good thought, wee can hardly retaine it; and when evill motions come, wee cannot of our selves resist them.

Satan is limited in his temptings.

5. *Vse.* Hence wee also learne, that in temptation, Satan can goe no further than God permits him: he could not touch *Job's* goods, his children; nor his bodie, till God gave him leave, Job 1. 12. and 2. 6. neither could the *Legion* of Devils enter into the herd of swine, till Christ bade them goe: wee therefore must bee patient in temptations, and beare them as comming from Gods hand; neither must wee feare the Devill overmuch, though he pinch our soules by his violent assaults, nay, though hee should torment and possesse our bodies really, for whatsoever he doth, is by Gods permission: onely wee must be carefull to please God, and to relie on him, who will shortly *tread Satan under the feet of all his children*, Rom. 16. 20.

Mark. 5. 12, 13.

6. *Vse.* That which we aske of God in prayer, wee must sincerely endeavour after in life; and therefore as we pray to God not to bee carried into temptation, so must we seeke to arme and furnish our selves with grace, that we may bee able to encounter with our spirituall enemies, and to withstand their assaults. This is the Apostles counsell, Ephes. 6. 11, 12, 13, &c. *Put yee on the whole armour of God: that yee may bee able to stand against the assaults of the Devill*, &c. then after hee nameth those Christian vertues, which as spirituall armour, the childe of God must take unto him, and arme his soule withall, if hee would persevere in grace unto the end. The first part of this armour, is *truth* or *veritie*, wherewith the loynes must bee girt about: and this is an excellent grace, whereby a man professeth true religion, and endeavoureth himselfe in the practice of all the duties of religion in *sincerities*, his speeches and his actions are suitable proceeding from an honest heart,

The Christian armour against temptation.

heart, that truly meaneth whatsoever the tongue uttereth, or the members of the bodie doth practise. The second part is *justice*, or *righteousnesse*, when a man leads his life unblameably and uprightly, that hee can truly say with the Apostle *Paul, I know nothing by my selfe*, Corinth. 4. 4. Indeed the best Christian hath his faults and fals, but yet hee must not live in knowen sinnes; for then hee cannot say, *I know nothing by my selfe*. The third is the *preparation of the Gospell of peace*, wherewith the feet must be shod. By *Gospell of peace* is meant the glad tydings of salvation by Christ revealed in the Gospell, which promiseth pardon of sinne, and life everlasting by Christ, and commanderh us by way of thankfulnesse, to deny our selves, to take up our crosse, and to follow Christ: now when wee finde our affections thus cleaving unto Christ, though it bee through tribulation, then have we put upon our feet this spirituall furniture. The fourth is *the shield of faith*, by which a man layes hold on the mercie of God in Christ for his salvation, and under it shrowds himselfe against the fiery darts of Satan. The fifth is *hope*, by which we wait for that salvation which we apprehend by faith. The sixth is *the word of God*, which wee must make a rule & square to all our thoughts, words, and deeds, seeking to subdue thereby all contrarie motions that would take place in our hearts. The last is *prayer*, whereby we betake our selves to God in all estates, craving mercie for the pardon of our sinnes, and strength of grace to resist temptation, and an happie deliverance out of the middest of it. And he that can take to himselfe these excellent vertues, and put upon him this complete armour of Christianitie, is ready and fit to meet with any temptation whatsoever; and howsoever he may be assaulted, yet he cannot be overcome, neither shall the gates of hell ever prevaile against him to hinder his salvation.

But deliver us from evill.

These words containe the second part of this petition, which is added as an exposition of the former: for then are wee not lead into temptation, when God delivers us from it, giving strength to withstand, and a good issue out of it.

Evill comprehendeth all our spirituall enemies.

The meaning. Some thinke, that by *evill* here is meant *Satan only*, that *evill one*, as hee is called, Matth. 13. 13. But we are to inlarge it further, to comprehend all our spirituall enemies: for first, this title *evill*, is not only given to Satan, but to *sinne* also, Rom. 12. 9. *Let us abhorre that which is evill*: 1 Pet. 3. 11. *Eschew evill*. And to the *world*: 1 Joh. 5. 19. *The whole world lieth in evill*: Gal. 1. 4. *Christ gave himselfe, to deliver us from this present evill world*. And to the *flesh*: that is, the corruption of our nature, for that is the evill *treasure of the heart*, Matth. 12. 35. Secondly, that advantage which the Devill hath against us, is by the world, the flesh, and sinne; and therefore with that wicked one the Devill, farre, the world, and the flesh must bee understood. Indeed the Devill is principall maine and principall evill, that great Tempter against whom we pray chiefly: but yet we also pray against sinne, the flesh, and the world, because they are Satans agents and instruments to temptation against us. We pray not to be delivered from Satans presence, for that is not possible, while we live in this vale of teares, where the Devill is a Prince, with an infinite multitude of wicked spirits, all which beffore them: but to get advantage against Gods childe; neither is his presence so dangerous, though it were visible. But here we have a greater matter in hand which we pray against, even Satans sleights and policies which he exercisith against Gods children, for their ruine and destruction: they indeed are many, but here I will prepound six most dangerous policies of Satan, which wee are to watch against.

Satans policies against Gods children.

I. Policie. When men have many good things in them, as knowledge in the mysterie of salvation, beside other morall vertues, as temperance, justice, &c. then the Devill labours that concupiscence may still reigne in their hearts, by their lying and living in some one sinne or other, whereto they are naturally inclined. *Cain* no doubt was brought up in the knowledge and service of God, as well as *Abel*; for he offered sacrifice unto God (though not with the like truth of heart that *Abel* did) but herewithall the Devill so wrought, that the horrible sinne of hatred and malice should possesse his heart, which brought him to kill his brother, and so to destruction: so *Judas* no doubt had excellent gifts of wisdome and providence, and therefore among all the Disciples hee was made as it were the Steward of our Saviour Christs family; hee had questionlesse much knowledge, and his carriage was such in his profession, that the Disciples knew not hee should be the Traitor, but everie one was afraid of himselfe, when our Saviour Christ said, *One of you shall betray me*, Joh. 12. 22. yet for all this, the Devill so wrought in his heart, that the concupiscence of covetousnesse should reigne in him, which moved him to betray his Master, and so brought him to perdition. And this course Satan holds to this present day in the bosome of the Church of God; he labours by might and maine to hold the professors of religion in some one sinne or other: and therefore we must alwayes pray, as here wee are taught, that this naturall concupiscence may bee daily mortified and made weake, so as it bud not forth in any branch of sinne reigning in us.

II. Policie. When Satan cannot procure some grosse corruption to reigne in the childe of God, then he labours to get him to commit some offence and sinne, whereby the name of God may bee dishonoured, his profession disgraced, his conscience wounded, and Gods children offended. Thus he dealt with *David*

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in his ſinnes of adulterie and murther, 2 Sam. 11. and chap. 12.9. and with *Peter* in the deniall of his Maſter, Matth.26.74. We therefore muſt pray according to this petition, that wee may [a] *be ſanctified throrowout, and that our whole ſpirit, and ſoule, and body, may be kept blameleſſe unto the comming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: and that [b] *our hearts may bee eſtabliſhed in everie good word and worke*: God delivering us from everie evill worke, and preſerving us unto his heavenly Kingdome, 2 Tim.4.18.

a 1 Theſſ.5.23.

b 1 Theſſ.3.13.

III. Policie. When the childe of God is fallen into any ſinne, then the Devill labours to caſt him aſleepe therein, that hee might *lye in it without remorſe*, and ſo never repent of it: thus hee dealt with *David*, who lay in his ſinne of adulterie and murther without repentance, one whole yeare almoſt: and thus he hath dealt with the nation of the Jewes, blinding their eyes and hardening their hearts, from the knowledge of the *Meſſias*, whom they crucified, even unto this day: and thus hee dealeth with many Chriſtians in the Church of God. Inregard whereof, wee muſt pray in temptation as *David* did, *that hee would not forſake us overlong*, Pſal. 119. 8. but though in juſtice hee may leave us to our ſelves for a time, yet hee would pleaſe to renew his mercies towards us, and repaire us by his grace.

IV. Policie. When the Lord vouchſafeth to men the meanes of ſalvation, as the Word and Sacraments, and chaſtiſements for ſinne, then Satan labours to make the ſame void and of none effect, that ſo they may not only miſſe of ſalvation, but bee condemned more deeply for the neglect and contempt of the meanes vouchſafed unto them: this *Paul* knew well, and therefore he ſent *Timothy* to the *Theſſalonians*, to know their faith, leſt the Tempter had tempted them, and ſo their labour upon them had been in vaine, 1 Theſſ.3.5. For this cauſe he is called that *evill one, who ſteales away the ſeed of the word from out their hearts*, Matth. 13. 19. and *that envious man who ſoweth tares among the ſeed*, v. 28. Here therefore we muſt pray againſt this practice of Satan, that as the Lord vouchſafeth the meanes of grace unto us, ſo he would give his bleſſing withall, that they may be profitable unto us: for without this, the meanes will turne to our deeper judgement.

V. Policie. When he cannot worke his will in their ſoules inwardly, as he deſires, then hee aſſayes to doe them miſchiefe by ſome outward Satanicall operations: as poſſeſſion, witchcraft, or ſtriking their bodies with ſtrange diſeaſes, or abuſing their dwelling places with fearefull noiſes and apparitions: thus hee plagued [c] *Job* in his goods, and in his body, when hee could not prevaile againſt his ſoule: and when hee could not prevaile againſt Chriſt by temptation, than he vexed him by tranſportation, Matt. 4.5,8. and thus hee bound *a daughter of Abraham eighteene yeares*, Luk. 13. 16. Here therefore we pray for the comfort of Gods providence, and for the preſence and aſſiſtance of the good Angels, that we may be preſerved, though not from temptations inward in minde, yet from ſuch bodily and outward abuſes and injuries, as the Devill would inflict upon us: for herein he is curbed and reſtrained ordinarily, in reſpect of that malice and enmitie which hee beares to the children of God: whereupon (I take it) the childe of God may lawfully pray againſt all outward croſſes and afflictions, ſo farre forth as they are evill, and proceed from that evill one, the Devill: for this is Gods promiſe to the godly perſon, Pſal.91.10. *There ſhall none evill come unto thee, neither ſhall any plagne come neere thy Tabernacle*; that is, ſo far forth as it is evill: for otherwayes it is moſt true, that *many are the troubles of the righteous*, becauſe it is many times good for them to bee afflicted, Pſal.119.71.

c Job 1. and 2.

How far we may pray againſt croſſes.

Pſal.34.19.

VI. Policie. Laſtly, Satan labours to bring Gods children to ſome fearefull and miſerable end; not ſo much for the bodily death, as in regard of the inward horror and terror of conſcience; for though he ſeldome ſpares any man, yet he reſerves the extremitie of his power and malice to mans laſt gaſpe. Indeed hee is many times reſtrained, ſo as many a childe of God can ſay at his end, in deſpite of Satan, [d] *Lord, now leteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace*: but where he is not reſtrained, there hee labours to bring men either to preſumption, or deſpaire. Here therefore wee are taught, to pray to God for a good and comfortable death in the Lord, and that wee may be ſo preſerved therein, and inabled by grace, that our end may neither bee evill to our ſelves, nor in appearance; but that wee may have both time and grace to prepare our ſelves, ſo as though our death bee never ſo ſudden, yet we be not unprepared: for though ſudden death be verie uncomfortable, yet is it never dangerous to him that is ready for the Lord: but the unprepared death is the plague of plagues; for after it there is no time nor meanes allowed unto man to alter the ſtate of his ſoule, Eccleſ.9.10.

d Luk.2.29.

Pray for a comfortable death.

Vſes. 1. That which we here pray for, wee muſt endevour to practiſe; and therefore our ſpeciall care muſt be to reſiſt the Devill, and to keepe our ſelves from the aſſaults of Satan unto ſinne, whether they come from our owne corruption, or from this evill world: 1 Joh.5. 18. *He that is borne of God ſinneth not, but keepeth himſelfe that the wicked one toucheth him not.* This we ſee may be done, and it is a notable ſigne of our adoption and regeneration: now the way to doe it, is ſet downe by the Apoſtle *Paul*, 1 Tim. 1, 18, 19. *Fights the good fight*: which hee expounds in the words following, which preſcribe two duties; *having faith and a good conſcience.* To *have faith* is to hold and maintaine true religion in life and death, renouncing all hereſie whatſoever, whether of Jewes, Turkes, Papiſts, or any other: which, whoſoever would doe, muſt not

Reſiſt the Devill.

The way how to reſiſt Satan.

content himſelfe with a ſhew of godlineſſe in profeſſion, but muſt get the power of religion faſt rooted in his heart, which he muſt expreſſe in his converſation. And for this end theſe rules muſt be remembred: Firſt, we muſt have in our hearts ſincere love to God in Chriſt, and to his Church, and true religion: Chriſt muſt have the chiefe place in our hearts, and our love to God in him muſt be ſo ſtrong, that it muſt overwhelme all other affections, ſo as wee may truly ſay with *Paul*, *I count all things loſſe, and doe judge them to bee dung, that I might win Chriſt*: and this muſt be the order of our love, wee muſt love God and Chriſt for themſelves, and the Church of God, and true religion, for Gods ſake. Secondly, wee muſt not only know and believe that Chriſt died for our ſinnes, and roſe againe for our juſtification; but wee muſt labour to feele the power and efficacie of his death, killing ſinne in us, and the vertue of his reſurrection, raiſing us up to newneſſe of life: he that hath only a ſhew of religion, may make profeſſion of faith in Chriſts death and reſurrection; but herein ſtands the power, when wee bee made conformable unto his death, in regard of the death of ſinne, and know the vertue of his reſurrection, by our holy endevour in new obedience, and doe frame our ſelves to his example in all ſuch things wherein he left himſelfe a patterne unto us. Thirdly, wee muſt not content our ſelves to know and profeſſe that God is merciſull, but withall wee muſt take obſervation of his loving favour towards us particularly, adding one obſervation to another, that ſo our hearts may bee rooted and grounded in the love of God. A man may make profeſſion of Gods grace and mercie, from a meere generall conceit and apprehenſion of it in his braine; but herein ſtands the power and pith of true religion, when a man by obſervation and experience in himſelfe, knowes the love of God in Chriſt towards him. And thus is faith and true religion held and maintained.

How to keepe the faith.

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Pſal. 3. 8.

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To have a good conſcience (which is the ſecond duties in this Chriſtian ſight) is to preſerve and keepe our conſcience ſo, as it may excuſe us, and not accuſe us unto God, in reſpect of living in any ſinne, how ſoever there may bee infirmities in us: to this end wee muſt obſerve theſe rules:

How to keepe a good conſcience.

Firſt, wee muſt have a double calling: the generall calling of a Chriſtian, wherein we muſt ſerve God; and a particular calling, according to our place and gifts, wherein wee muſt exercile our ſelves for the good of men. Theſe two muſt nor bee ſevered, ſo as either bee wanting: but hee that would keepe a good conſcience, muſt practiſe his generall calling in doing the duties of his particular calling: it is an eaſie thing to profeſſe Chriſtianitie in the Church, and many a man doth ſo, that keepes no good conſcience in his private calling at home: but this is the evidence of a good conſcience, when a man ſhewes himſelfe a Chriſtian in his calling at home, and converſeth among his brethren.

Idleneſſe Deuins pillow.

Secondly, wee muſt always bee exercised in doing ſome good dutie, either of our generall or particular calling, or in ſome commendable furtherance thereunto: for idleneſſe is the Devills pillow, whereon men either ploe or deviſe ſome evill, or are luſled aſleepe in ſecuritie: but diligence in our calling is our way, wherein we have promiſe of protection by Gods Angels from the Devill, Pſal.91.11. but if wee bee out of our calling, wee lye open to the hurt of the enemie: when *Peter* without warrant from his calling, generall or particular, would needs goe warme himſelfe in *Caiphas* hall, what fell out? upon a ſmall aſſault by a ſilly Maid, hee denied Chriſt in moſt fearefull manner, Joh.18. 25, 26.

Thirdly, in every eſtate of life wee muſt labour to ſee a ſpeciall providence of God, and therein to reſt contented, bee it better or bee it worſe. It is an eaſie thing to ſee and acknowledge Gods mercie in health, peace, and plenty, and to reſt contented therewith: but if wee would have peace towards God in our owne hearts, wee muſt labour to quiet our ſelves with his diſpoſing hand in the day of trouble, ſickneſſe, or any other diſtreſſe of life or death.

Fourthly, whatſoever wee would doe when we die, that we muſt now begin, and continue doing it every day while we live; to wit, repent of our daily ſinnes and leave them, deſire earneſtly to be reconciled to God in Chriſt, and ſtedfaſtly to beleeve all his gracious promiſes: he that hath theſe graces ſhall die in peace; and therefore if we would live in the peace of conſcience, we muſt labour for them every day.

How wee muſt keepe company.

Fifthly, in all ſocieties and converſings with men, we muſt be careſull either to doe good unto them, or to receive good from them: for where neither of theſe is, there Satan ſhewes his preſence, and therefore we muſt ſhunne ſuch company as give themſelves to plot or practiſe ſome iniquity: for evill converſings corrupt good manners.

Sixthly, we muſt lead our lives, not after our owne fancie, but according to the rule of Gods Word: we muſt live by faith, and not by ſight: when we ſee no ſigues of Gods favour, but rather of his anger and indignation, yet then muſt we truſt in him, and reſte upon his mercy: this is againſt reaſon, yet a worke of *faith, which is the evidence of things which are not ſeene*, Heb. 11.1.

2. *Vſe.* If we pray God to deliver us from evill, then we muſt beware of all Satanicall practices, as meanes of helpe in any diſtreſſe: this is groſſe hypocriſie, to pray againſt the evils of Satan, and to give our ſelves to the practice of them: herein many offend; for the Papiſts ſay this prayer, but yet their religion in many things is a groſſe practice of magicke and ſorcery: for firſt, the conſecration of their hoſt in the maſſe

masse is plaine commination: and so are their exorcismes in hallowing salt, bread, and water, their casting out of devils by certaine words, by the signe of the crosse, the application of reliques, and such like: nay, come to our selves, what is more common among us than to use charmes and amulets, to seeke to witches and sorcerers when any strange affection doth befall us? And the setting of a figure though it be not grosse magicke, yet therein is a close and privy worke of the devill, his hand is deepe therein: and the Church in former times hath condemned it for witchcraft: for charmes, characters, and amulets bee but the devils watchword and sacraments to set him a working: what though the words used be good, yet therein is Satans deeper policie, who *turnes himselfe into an Angel of light*, under faire showes working the greatest mischiefe. But what horrible impiety is this: that when God gives us occasion to come unto him, we leave him and runne for helpe to his professed enemies.

Charmes and Amulets bee diabolical.

2 Cor. 11. 14.

3. *Use.* This branch of the petition serveth to direct us what to doe in this case: say that a dwelling house, or some other place is by Gods permission, haunted and abused by some evill spirit, whether may a man lawfully frequent, or abide in such a place? *Answ.* By this petition its plaine he may not; for here we pray to be delivered from evill, and therefore wee may not voluntarily thrust our selves into such a place as is hanted by the devill: would we come within the compasse of the lyons paw, or within the chaine of a mad dog, or a hunger-bitten beare? why then should wee rashly thrust our selves into the danger of the devill, who like a roaring lyon seeks continually whom he may devoure. Many ignorant people are so hold-hardy, that they will rayle upon and defie the Devill, and command him to be gone. But without a calling thereunto, wee may not so doe. Indeed, if by Gods providence wee be called to live in such places necessarily, then this wee may doe, wee must not reason with the Devill, but betake our selves to God by humble and earnest prayer, and complaine of Satans vexation, making God our shelter and defence both for soule and body: else if wee presume to meddle with him without a calling from God, we may justly be foiled and abused by him, (as the *sonnes of Sceva were*) because we have no promise from the Lord to be protected from him.

Where haunted by the Diuell it is to be shunned.

Act. 19. 13. 16.

For thine is the kingdome, and the power, and the glorie, for ever: Amen.

These words containe the reason of the former six petitions: touching which we must observe two things in generall: first, that they are not a reason to move God whose will is unchangeable: but to perswade the childe of God that prayeth thus, that God will grant his requests. Secondly, that this reason is not peculiar to the last petition, but generally belonging to them all: as, *Hallowed be thy name, because thine is the kingdome, power, and glory: and so for the rest.*

Why Gods kingdome is mentioned.

The meaning. Kingdome. This word imports three things: First, that he is all sufficient of himselfe to doe all things whatsoever, needing no helpe nor instrument beside his soveraigne will: Gen. 17. 1. *I am God all-sufficient.* Secondly, that hee hath a soveraigne right and title to all things in heaven and earth, as a King hath to those which belong to his territories and jurisdiction. Thirdly, that hee hath soveraigne rule and authoritie over all things in heaven and earth, governing them as hee pleaseth, and bringing them into an absolute subjection.

Further, the kingdome of God is twofold: *The kingdome of his providence*, whereby hee rules and governs all things in heaven and earth, even the Devill and all his angels and instruments: and the *kingdome of grace*, whereby he governes his Church by his Word and Spirit: and both these are here to be understood. *Thine.* The Kingdome is here called Gods, for two causes: First, to shew that God hath his Kingdome of himselfe and *from* himselfe alone: thus the Kingdome of grace and of providence are both his. Secondly, to distinguish God from earthly kings: for though they have a kingdome, power, and glory, as *Daniel* tells *Nebuchadnezzar*; yet they have all these from God, not of themselves: but God hath them of himselfe, and not from any other.

Gods Kingdome twofold.

Now because our nature is blinde in the things of God, I will here propound some reasons to prove that God hath such a soveraigne Kingdome, as also to shew the excellency of it: First, this appeares by that excellent order which God hath set in all his workes by their creation: for how fitly doe times and seasons, as spring-time and summer, autumne and winter succeed one another? how sweetly doe the heavenly creatures, the sunne, moone, and starres serve for the creatures here below, as herbs and plants, how doe these serve for beasts and fowles? and all of them for the use of man: as this proves against the Atheist that there is a God, so it shewes the soveraignty and most wise regiment of his Kingdome. When a man sees a great army in good array, and every one keeping his place and standing constantly, he will presently commend the wisdome and authority of the leader: why then should wee not acknowledge the power and soveraignty of the almighty, in that constant station of the creatures in that sweet order which they observe from the creation?

Proofes of Gods soveraigne Kingdome.

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Secondly, the terror and accusation of a guilty conscience doth argue evidently the absolute soveraignty of Gods Kingdome: for when a man hath committed some grievous sinne, either against the law of Nature, or the written Word of God, though it be so secretly that no

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man know of it, yet will his conscience accuse and fright him; which it would not doe, unlesse he were to answer for that fact to God the soveraigne Lord of all.

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Thirdly, men of death, that is, such as by some notorious crime deserve death, though through the ignorance or negligence of Magistrates they be let to escape, yet ordinarily they are overtaken with some fearefull judgement, and one way or other meet with their desert: which is a speciall worke of Gods soveraigne providence.

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Fourthly, the Gospell preached is as contrary to mans corrupt nature, as fire is to water; and yet hath it in all ages wonne men unto it, to professe it, and to love it so, as they have beene content for the Gospels sake, to forsake house and lands, wife and children, yea and life it selfe. This no word of man could ever doe, and therefore it argues plainely, that some supernaturall power worketh with it, which drawes the heart of man unto it.

Here some may say, that the devill hath a kingdome contrary to Gods kingdome, wherein he reigneth; and therefore Gods kingdome is not absolute. *Ans.* If we regard the malice of Satan, or the practice of the wicked, it may seeme Gods kingdome should not be absolute, because they continually rebell against his revealed will: but consider the power of God, which overruleth Satan and all his instruments, disposing most wisely of all their workes, to his owne glory, the good of his Church, and their owne ruine, and then we shall plainely see that God ruleth over all: for howsoever the devill and his angels, and all other his instruments oppose themselves unto the word of God, which is the law of his kingdome of grace, yet God willingly permits all such workes, and restrains them all at his pleasure; so as that which comes to passe against Gods revealed will, is not contrary to his absolute will.

Gods power.

Thine is the power. By *power* is meant an ability in God whereby he can doe whatsoever he will, and more than he will doe: for the better conceiving of it, note these two things: First, that God is not only powerfull, but even power it selfe in regard of his nature, as hee is goodnesse and wisdome, &c. Men and Angels are called powerfull, as receiving power from God; but God onely is power it selfe, because his nature is infinite in power, as in all other properties. Secondly, that power and will in God are one and the same: for our better conceiving of them, they may bee distinguished, but in themselves they differ not: for Gods willing of a thing, is the effecting and doing of it. It is not so in us: for we will many things which we cannot doe: but whatsoever God willeth, that he doth; and that which he cannot doe, he cannot will. The Scripture saith, *God cannot lie, nor deny himselfe, nor die, &c.* now as hee cannot doe these things, so neither can hee will them: for they are no workes of power, but of weaknesse and frailty; and therefore is God omnipotent, because hee can neither doe nor will the same: *Thine is, &c.* Here also we say, Gods power is his owne, that is, of himselfe alone, not received from any other, as is also said of kingdome, and glory, to distinguish the true God from all creatures who have not power, and kingdome, and glory of themselves, but from God; whereas all these are of himselfe alone.

And the glory. By glory is meant excellencie and majesty: and this property rightly ariseth from the two former; for seeing he hath an absolute soveraignty over all things, and power answerable to dispose and governe them at his pleasure; therefore of right all glory, and majesty, and excellency belongs unto him: yea, the glory of all creatures is from him: so that sinfull man must say with *Daniel, Unto us belongs shame and confusion.* Dan. 9. 7. *but unto God be honour, and glory, and power, and dominion for evermore.*

Gods glory.

The use. I. This reason thus conceived and understood, containes a notable ground of trust and confidence in God, and of prayer to God in all distresse of life and death: for we have a father, whose is *kingdome, power, and glory*: now his *power* assures us that he is able to helpe us: and is he *our King*, and we his *subjects*? then he is willing to helpe us. Is *glory* his? why, what can make more for his glory, than to shew mercy to his people, in hearing their prayers, and helping them in distresse? Psal. 50. 15. *I will heare thee, and thou shalt glorifie my name.*

A ground of trust in God.

II. These words are a notable forme of giving thanks and praise to God: for when the heavenly creatures are said to give thanks to God, they doe it to this effect; Rev. 4. 9, 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, and glory, and power.* Againe, Phil. 4. 6. *Be distrustfull in nothing, but in all things let your requests be made knowne to God with giving of thanks*; where wee see prayer and thanksgiving must goe together. Now this being a perfect forme of prayer, must needs comprehend thanksgiving with petitions, as therefore in the six petitions, Christ taught us to aske all needfull things of God; so in this reason he teacheth us how to give thankes: for these three, *kingdome, power, and glory*, doe generally comprehend all matter of praise and thanksgiving unto God: yea, it is the summe of all the Psalms of praise: and therefore when *David* blessed God, it was to this effect, 1 Chron. 29. 11, 12. *Thine, O Lord, is greatnesse, and power, and glory, and victory, and praise: for all that is in heaven and earth is thine: thine is the kingdome, O Lord, and thou excellest as head over all: both riches and honour come from thee, and thou reignest over all: and in thine hand is power and strength, &c.*

This point well observed, directeth us in two Christian duties: first, that wee must be earnest and frequent in giving praise and thanks to God: for the first thing we aske, is grace

We must be frequent in praying to God.

to glorifie Gods name, and the last thing we here doe, is to ascribe glorie to God indeed. Secondly, here wee see in what manner we must give thankes to God, namely, in every blessing we must ascribe *kingdome, and power, and glory* unto God: as in the use of meat and drinke, first, therein labour to see, and accordingly to ascribe the kingdome to God; that is, acknowledge Gods soveraignty in that creature: that the right and interest thereto belongs to God, and that thou hast it from him, and not of thy selfe. Secondly, see and acknowledge the power and providence of God in that creature: his providence in that thou hast it; and his power, in that it serves for thy good and comfort, in thy nourishment and refreshing. Thirdly, when thou art comforted therewith, give honour and glory to God, so thou shalt be truly thankfull. And thus must wee be thankfull to God for his Word, and all other blessings that wee enjoy. Yea, this direction must we observe for our behaviour in affliction: we must labour to see and acknowledge Gods soveraignty and power overus as we are his creatures, and that hee hath right to dispose of us at his pleasure, and therefore we must humble our selves under his hand, desiring grace so to behave our selves therein, that we may glorifie his name. And thus shall we honour God even in affliction.

How to praise God.

III. Here we see a way whereby wee may obtaine the things wee aske of God: namely, we must confesse our owne unworthinesse, taking shame and confusion to our selves, and give all praise, and honour, and glory to God. Thus did *Iacob*, Gen. 32. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant*: so, Dan. 9. 7. *To thee, O Lord, belongeth righteousnesse, but unto us open shame*. And thus coming in humilitie of heart, renouncing our selves and all that wee can doe, and endeavouring to give all glory to God, wee shall finde mercy with the Lord for the obtaining of all our requests.

How to obtaine our requests in prayer.

IV. Is kingdome, power, and glory Gods? then he is to be feared above all creatures: for howsoever Satan and earthly Monarchs have dominion and power, yet it is not of themselves, but from God: they can doe nothing but by power and permission from God, but God of himselfe can punish and destroy.

Lastly, hereby wee must be moved to love God, and to yeeld obedience unto him in all good duties: for to such will he shew his soveraignty and power for all good things, that so they may give the glory of all to God that gives them.

Amen, We have heard the preface, and the petitions of this prayer: now we come to the third part of it, which is the Conclusion, in this word, *Amen*: which is as much as *verily, truly*. It is commonly taken to bee a word of wishing in this place, importing as much as, So be it, I wish it to be so, or such like. But we must

Amen, what it signifies here.

A know, that it hath here a further use, to wit, not onely to express our desire of the things wee aske, but also to testifie our faith in assurance of receiving them according to our desire: for so it is usually taken in the new Testament, where it is used to affirme or assevet a thing with vehemency and certainty. Againe, our Saviour Christ giving both direction and incouragement to prayer saith thus, *Whatsoever you asire when ye pray, believe that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you*, Mark. 11. 24. where hee shewes two principall things required in prayer: the first, an earnest desire of the grace and blessing we aske: the second, is faith whereby wee believe that God will graunt us the things we aske. Now our desires were sufficiently expressed in the six petitions: and therefore, this being a perfect platforme of prayer, here undoubtedly is propounded the testification of our faith, to this effect: *As we have craved these things at thy hands, O Lord, so doe we believe that in thy good time thou wilt for Christs sake, graunt the same unto us*. So that it is not here to be taken, as it is commonly, onely for a bare assent of the people answering the Minister in the congregation; but for a part of the prayer both to Minister and people that pray in faith, whether publikely or privately: and that so much more excellent than the former, by how much our faith excelleth our desire: yea, it is the seale of our hearts, which wee must set to every petition, for to testifie and confirme the

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same unto our selves; as when we say, *Hallowed be thy name*, our hearts must say, *Amen*: that is, as I desire grace to glorifie thy name, so I beleeve Lord, thou wilt enable me thereunto: and so for the rest.

The use. I. From the union of this word with the petitions, we learne, that every childe of God must beleeve, particularly and certainly the pardon of his owne sinnes, and endevour by grace to attaine thereunto, if as yet hee cannot be perfixaded of it. This the Papists deny, teaching that a man must onely beleeve in generall, that remission of sinnes belongs to Gods Church, and hope well for himselfe; and they make it presumption for a man to arrogate particular certainty unto himselfe. But it is no presumption, because wee must beleeve to receive from God, that wee aske according to his will: now God bids us aske forgivenesse of our particular sinnes, and therefore we must beleeve it, and so by faith, may be assured of it: as for their generall faith, it differeth not from the faith of devils; for they beleeve there is remission of sinnes in Gods Church. And to say we hope well when we are not assured by faith, is to be way both ignorance and negligence in the matter of our salvation: for faith is the ground of things hoped for, and therefore their hope without faith must needs be a blinde presumption. And here further we may note, that by their opinion they abolish a great part of the Gospell; for with the gracious promises

Pardon of sinne must be beleeved particularly.

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promises of mercy in Christ made therein, the Gospell commandeth every penitent person that beleeveth, to apply the same promises particularly to himselfe; and his part of it they cut off, and so deprive the childe of God of all true comfort.

II. This testification of our faith joyned to our requests, shewes that all prayer ought to be made in a knowne tongue, for else the assent and assiance of the heart cannot be given together. *Ob*. The word here used is an Hebrew word, which was unknowne to the Greeke Churches, now if one word of maine use in prayer, may be in an unknowne tongue, why may not many, and so a whole prayer. *Ans*. Though this word *Amen* be Hebrew, yet by use it became as familiar and well knowne in the Greeke Church, and so in other Churches, as any word in their owne dialect; as many Latine words (as *Nisi prius*, and other termes of law) by common use, become familiar and well knowne in our English tongue.

Prayer in a knowne tongue.

The use of the Lords Prayer.

The principall use of prayer is, to be a patterne and direction whereby the Church of God, and every member of it, may frame their prayers to God on any occasion. And because many through ignorance faile in this point, therefore I will stand somewhat to shew how the Lords prayer must be made a patterne to our prayers. For this end we must apply the severall petitions of this prayer, both to the speciall times of prayer, as *morning* and *evening*; and also to the speciall occasions whereupon we pray: which may be reduced to some of these three, to wit: 1. *some weighty businesse* we have in hand: 2. *some affliction* we are in, or in danger of: 3. or in regard of *death*.

How to make the Lords prayer a patterne in praying.

Now to apply the petitions to each of these severally: *I. In the morning*. A fit prayer for that time, before wee set upon the duties of our calling, may thus be framed from these petitions: 1. we must desire the Lord to give us grace to seeke the advancement of his glory that day following, in the duties of our calling, and in every thing we take in hand. 2. that hee would rule in our hearts by his grace, and guide us by his word that whole day. 3. enable us to doe his will that day and not our owne, even with readinesse and delight. 4. strengthen us to depend upon his providence that day for all things needfull for this life. 5. that hee would humble us in our selves for our sinnes, and give us repentance for them, and pardon in Christ Jesus, that so no judgement light upon us for them, and that our hearts may be inclined to love and mercy towards our brethren, as we desire mercy with God for our owne soules. 6. that God would strengthen us against temptation, that neither the world, the flesh, nor the devill prevaile against us. And of all these wee must gather assurance, because all sovereignty, and power, and glory, belongs to God.

For morning prayer.

II. At evening also, wee may fitly apply

Evening prayer.

A these petitions for the comfortable commending of our selves to God that night: 1. intreating God to blesse our rest unto us, that thereby we may bee fitter to glorifie God. 2. That wee may rest and sleepe safely as his true subjects, under his gracious regiment. 3. That we may doe his will as well in rest as in labour, in the night and secretly, as in the day and light of men. 4. That he would blesse our rest and sleepe, that it may comfortably serve for the preservation of our lives. 5. That he would forgive the sinnes of the day past, that so no curse, terrour, nor feare meet with us for them the night following. 6. That hee would keepe us in our rest, from all sinnefull lusts, from all wicked motions and suggestions either waking or sleeping.

III. When we undertake any weighty matter or businesse of our calling, wee may fitly apply these petitions in prayer to God for ability and good successe therein: for whatsoever we take in hand, we must doe it in the name of the Lord: 1. Wee must pray that in this whole businesse our hearts may be set sincerely to seeke the advancement of Gods glory. 2. That the Lord would vouchsafe to guide and governe us in doing the worke whatsoever it be. 3. That in doing of it, we may make conscience to doe the will of God, and to obey him, from the beginning to the end of it. 4. That wee may by faith relie upon Gods providence, for the issue and effect of our whole endevour. 5. That none of our sinnes may bring a curse upon us in the worke. 6. That neither Satan nor any other enemy of our soules, may hinder us by temptation, but that God would deliver us from them all.

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Prayer in weighty affaires.

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IV. When any affliction lies upon us or ours, we may hence frame holy requests to God: Intreating, 1. That we may honour God by patience and obedience in that affliction, and not dishonour him. 2. That God would shew in us the power of his gracious regiment in that affliction, and not suffer Satan or our owne corruption to reigne in us. 2. That we may obey God therein, as well as in any other estate of peace or ease. 4. That wee may see his providence therein, and be patient, relying also upon the same hand of God for our deliverance. 5. That our sinnes may not turne it into a curse, but that we having the pardon of our sinnes, may make good use thereof, for our humiliation and reformation. 6. That wee may not in that our weaknesse bee assaulted of Satan above our strength, but that God would deliver us from all temptations.

How to pray in affliction.

V. In the houre of death we may most comfortably commend our selves to God, following these petitions: praying, first, that we may glorifie God in sicknesse and death, as well as in life and health. 2. That God would now shew the comfortable worke and regiment of his Word and Spirit in our hearts, even above all that we have felt in the time of our health. 3. That we

In the houre of death.

D

may as readily and cheerefully obey God dying as living. 4. That God would give his blessing upon all meanes wee shall use for our comfort or recoverie, making us contented with his providence, even in death it selfe. 5. That wee may be truly humbled for our sinnes, and having comfortable assurance of mercy and pardon, may with joy render up our soules into the hands of God in the moment of death. 6. That seeing Satan is most busie and malicious in our greatest weaknesse, it would please the Lord to magnifie his mercy in strengthening our soules against all the assaults of sinne and Satan. Thus wee see how in all estates of life and death, we may have sweet and comfortable recourse to God following these petitions: wee must therefore labour to know and understand this heavenly prayer, that so we may use it on all occasions to the glory of our God, and the comfort of our soules: we cannot give more evident testimony of the grace of Adoption, than by the sincere exercise of the gift of prayer, when we can come with boldnesse into the presence of our heavenly father: and therefore wee must give our selves to the serious and often imitation of this heavenly patterne, and not content our selves to say over the words, but from a feeling heart powre out our soules before God, according to the meaning of this prayer in all estates.

A pattern of a godly life.

2. *Vse.* These petitions may serve for a notable direction according to which wee may frame our whole lives: for what wee aske of God in prayer, that must we endevour to practise in our lives: and therefore according to our requests in these petitions, must wee spend our time in a godly endevour after these six things: 1. Our chiefe care and endevour must be every day to bring some glory to God. 2. Wee must every day yeeld up our selves in soules and bodies unto God, submitting our selves in all things unto his godly regiment. 3. We must endevour to doe his will in all things, every day; making conscience of all sin whereby wee rebell against him. 4. Wee must apply our selves faithfully to our callings, yet so as wee still depend upon Gods providence for a blessing in every thing we take in hand. 5. Wee must humble our selves every day before God in regard of our daily offences, still confessing our sinnes, and craving pardon for them at the hands of God. 6. Wee must daily flie to God for helpe and succour in our spirituall combate with sinne and Satan, striving manfully against our owne corrupt nature, against the world, and the devill.

Notes of Adoption out of the Lords prayer.

3. *Vse.* This prayer of Christ, ministers most heavenly comfort to every childe of God, by certifying him of his Adoption: for out of every petition he may gather a speciall note thereof. As, 1. an earnest and hearty desire in all things to further the glory of God. 2. A care and readinesse to resigne our selves in subjection to God, to be ruled by his Word and Spirit in thought, word, and deed. 3. A sincere endevour to doe his will in all things with cheerefulnesse, making conscience of every thing wee know to be evill: this is an infallible note of the child of God. 4. Upright walking in a mans lawfull calling, and yet still by faith to rely upon Gods providence, being well pleased with Gods sending whatsoever it is. 5. Every day to humble a mans selfe before God for his offences, seeking his favour in Christ unfainedly, and so daily renuing his faith and repentance. 6. A continuall combat betweene the flesh and the Spirit, corruption haling and drawing one way, and grace resisting the same and drawing another way: where this striving and resistance is in minde and heart, there is the Spirit, for else all world goe full sway with corruption. Hereby then make search in thy selfe for these graces of God, and if thou finde them in thee, comfort thy selfe in assurance of thine Adoption; and though thou canst not finde them all, yet if there be an unfained desire after them, when thou puttest up these requests unto God, comfort thy selfe, for thou art the childe of God: for without the Spirit of prayer, which is the Spirit of adoption, we cannot *call God father*, nor say *hallowed be thy name*, from a true heart, unfainedly desiring Gods glory.

Markes of a carnall man.

4. *Vse.* Out of these petitions wee may observe the plaine markes of a carnall man: as, 1. To neglect the glory of God, and to seeke his owne prayse and glory. 2. To follow the sway of his owne corruptions, suffering them to be his guide, and to neglect to yeeld subjection and obedience to the Word of God. 3. To make no conscience of sinne, if it fit his humour, so his owne will be satisfied, he cares not for the doing of Gods will. 4. Not to rest on Gods providence for the things of this life, but wholly to rely upon the meanes; if they faile, his heart is downe, and his hope is gone. 5. To goe on in sinne, without remorse, or humbling himselfe unto God: this impenitence is a plaine marke of a carnall man. 6. To runne headlong into temptation, without feare or feeling, so as he findes no occasion to pray for deliverance from sinne: hee that hath any of these six things reigning in him, is a carnall man; therefore trie thy selfe, if thou finde them in thee, turne unto God by true repentance.

And looke what we have said of prayer, according to the patterne of the former petitions, may also be said of thanksgiving, after the example of these words, *For thine is the kingdome, the power, and the glory.* We have showed the use of them before, and so accordingly in all Gods blessings and works of his providence, for which we must give thanks; we must first labour to see therein the soveraignty and power of God, and then we must ascribe the same to God, with all glory, and prayse, and thanksgiving. And not onely give assent, but with assurance of heart wait for the fruition of every grace and blessing

blessing we aske of God, according to his will: *Amen.*

V. 14. *For if ye doe forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you.*

V. 15 *But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, no more will your heavenly father forgive you your trespasses.*

Of forgiving others.

These two verses containe a reason of the fifth petition, concerning the forgivenesse of our sinnes; which is propounded with a limitation and condition of our forgiving them that trespasse against us: the reason here is, *because in this behalfe, wee shall finde such measure with God, as we mete out unto our brethren.*

Who must forgive.

For the meaning of the words, three points must be discussed: First, whom this reason doth concerne, namely, private men for private trespasses: it reacheth not to Magistrates and publike persons in their function, who be the *Ministers*[a] *of God to take vengeance on them that doe evill:* for to such the Lord saith, *Thine eye*[b] *shall not spare the offenders:* but according to the quality of the offence, must hee execute judgement upon offenders, *for the removing of evill.* And so must parents and masters deale in their families, and Ministers in their publike dispensation of the Word: for else offences would so abound, that there could be no living for Gods people in the world.

a Rom.13.4.
b Deut.19.13.19.

II. Point. How doe these depend one upon another, *our forgiving of men, and Gods forgiving us?* *Ans.* Wee must not conceive that our forgiving men their trespasses, is a cause why God forgives us: for we are by nature dead in sinne, and cannot doe any good thing of our selves, till we be enabled thereunto of God: but our forgiving is a signe that God hath forgiven us, being indeed a fruit of our reconciliation with God; for it is a signe of true repentance, which is a fruit of faith, whereby we apprehend the mercy of God for the pardon of our sinnes in Christ.

How our forgivenesse goth before Gods.

III. Point. How should our forgivenesse, goe before Gods forgiving us: for so the words seeme to import, *If you forgive--your heavenly father will forgive you, &c.* *Ans.* The pardon of sinne which God gives must bee considered two ways: first, as it is given in heaven; secondly, as it is revealed and assured to the conscience of man: now the pardon of sinne in heaven always goes before our forgiving others: but our assurance of pardon with God, followes after our forgiving of men: for a mans sinnes may be forgiven with God, and yet hee may long remaine without the assurance thereof in his owne conscience. This we may see in *David:* for when *Nathan* said, c *The Lord hath put away thy sinne,* no doubt it was forgiven in heaven; but yet his d *earnest prayer* for pardon afterward shewes plainly, that he did not upon *Nathans* speech receive the comfortable assurance of pardon in his owne conscience. This then is Christs meaning: that if we forgive men their trespasses, God will assure us in our consciences that he hath forgiven us; otherwise, if we will not forgive, God will deny us that assurance.

c 2 Sam.12.13.
d Psal.51.

Private wrongs must be forgiven.

The use of this point is first and chiefly this; wee must learne to forgive and forget all private wrongs and injuries done unto us, whether great or small, without desire of revenge. The reasons to move us hereunto are these: First, it is Gods commandement here expresly injoyned, which must needs binde the conscience to obedience. Secondly, if wee will not forgive men, God will not forgive us: this Christ inforceth by doubling the sentence: now without Gods forgivenesse there is no salvation, and therefore we must be ready to forgive, as wee tender our owne salvation. Thirdly, the frailty of our nature is such, that wee our selves are subject to offer wrong to others: this is intimated in this phrase, *Except you forgive men their trespasses*; so that every man is prone to trespasse against others: and therefore as we would be forgiven when we trespasse, so must we also forgive men their trespasses.

Motives.
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Rules of forgiving.

Now for the better performing of our duty herein, these rules must be observed: *I.* We shall perceive in sundry men many wants and frailties, which mens lawes punish not; as in old men frowardnesse, in others hastinesse; and in some ambition and desire of praise: now these and such like we must in love passe by, without taking notice thereof, Prov.19.11. *It is the glory of a man to passe by an offence. II. Rule.* If men give us some light occasions of offence, as upbraid us with our ignorance, unskilfulnesse, basenesse, poverty, or such like, we must lightly passe them over, preferring the bond of peace before outward reputation. *III. Rule.* Though a man doe unto us that which is indeed flat injury, yet if it doe not manifestly hinder Gods glory, or too much prejudice our good estate; by hurting our good name, our goods, or life; wee must cause our private griefe and hurt to yeeld to publike peace. *IV. Rule.* If men doe us such great wrongs as manifestly hinder Gods glory, and our good estate, in life, goods, or name; then we must use the helpe of the Magistrate, and the lawfull defence of lawes provided for that end. Always remembring, that in seeking to right our selves, wee lay aside all malice, hatred, and desire of revenge, and with a single heart propound Gods glory in the reformation of the party that doth us wrong.

Confession and reformation go together.

Secondly, in this reason perswading to forgiveness we may see, that pardon of sinne before God, and reformation of life goe together: for here by this one branch of a reformed life *in brotherly forgiveness*, is understood all of the same kind: but where is no reformation of life, there is no pardon of sinne before God. Wouldest thou therefore be assured in thy conscience of Gods speciall favour towards thee in Christ? then reform thy life by every Law of God: for this will give thee assurance from God: but if thy life be unreformed, thy hope of pardon is a meere conceit of thine owne braine: and therefore if thou want reformation, now beginne, and if thou have begunne, then hold on, and doe it more and more, for thy more full assurance.

v. 16 *Moreover, when ye fast, look not sowre as the hypocrites: for they disfigure their faces, that they might seeme unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you that they have their reward.*

Of Fasting.

Our Saviour Christ, having rectified the abuses in Almes-giving, and in prayer, doth here come to a third Christian duty, namely, Fasting, wherein as in the former, first hee seeks to reforme abuses, and then prescribes the true manner thereof. But before we come to these particularly, I will in generall handle the doctrine of Fasting, for the better understanding of this text, and exercise of this duty. And first we must know, that Christ here speakes not of a civill fast, appointed by Magistrates in their dominions for civill respects; but of a religious fast, respecting the worship of God: which appeares by this, that he joyneth the doctrine of fasting to the doctrine of prayer, which is a speciall part of Gods holy worship.

Of a religious fast six points.

I What kinds of works be fasting works.

Now touching a religious fast, I will here handle six points: First, *what kinds of works a fast is.* The Scripture speakes of two kinds of works: if one commanded of God; others left indifferent. *Works commanded*, be *good workes*, and *parts of Gods service*, because he commandeth them, as prayer, thanksgiving, almes-deeds &c. *Workes indifferent* be in themselves neither good nor evill, because they be neither commanded of God, nor forbidden; as to eat, drinke, buy, sell, &c. And to this kind of works must wee referre fasting: for it is not simply commanded of God, and so no part of his worship in it selfe, more than eating is. And yet consider fasting in it circumstances, to wit, as a meanes to further and to testifie our humiliation in repentance, and our zeale in prayer, and so it is a good worke: for in that use, and to that

A and God commanded it, and it is a part of his worship. If it be said, there is no commandement for it in the new Testament: I answer, if wee consider it in the forenamed use and end, there is: for the same commandement that injoyneth prayer, and humiliation, injoyneth fasting; because it is a meanes to further them both: for every commandement includeth all necessarie furtherances to the meane duty. Again, we have in the new Testament examples of ordinary fasting, which are without all exception, in our Saviour Christ and his Apostles, with the occasions thereof set downe, wherein they fasted. Now this is a rule in Divinity, that *the ordinary examples of the godly approved in Scripture, being against no generall precept, have the force of a generall rule, and are to be followed.*

B

II. Point. How a religious fast is to be performed. In a religious fast three things are required: *First*, Abstinence from meat and drinke for one day, at least, till the evening: for abstinence from morning till noone is no fast. When *Hester* required the Jewes to fast for her, shee forbids them [a] *to eat, or to drinke, during the fast.* And when *David* fasted and prayed for his child begotten in adultery, he would [b] *eat nothing till he had ended his humiliation, perceiving that the childe was dead.* This is a thing granted by all Protestants. And the very names of fasting used in the old and new Testament, import a totall abstinence for that time: which must be observed, to discover the absurdity of Popish fasts, wherein they allow men to drinke off if they will, and eat also, so it be not flesh: but in fasting, abstinence must be used from all meat and drinke, so farre as health and strength will suffer. Secondly, Abstinence from all delights of Nature, whereby the outward man may be cheered and refreshed, *as musicke, sweet smells, soft apparell, recreations*, and such like. This *Daniel* observed for three weeks of dayes; *I ate* (saith he) *no pleasant bread, neither came flesh or wine in my mouth, neither did I annoint my selfe at all*: and the like may wee see in many examples of the old Testament. They cast [d] *dust and ashes upon their heads*, in stead of annointing themselves with oyle: and for soft apparell, they put on [e] *sackcloth* next their skin: they [f] *waked* when they should have slept; and *lay upon the ground* in stead of beds: the [g] *bridegroome went out of his chamber, and the bride out of her bride-chamber*: for mirth there was mourning; and [h] *howling* in stead of singing. Thirdly, a man must humble and afflict his bodie in fasting; and therefore must be sparing in his diet and delights before the day of fasting: for a man may so pamper and fill himselfe, that he shall not need to eat or drinke for one whole day; but such persons fast not: the time of our fast must be a [i] *time of our humiliation*: men must *afflict themselves therein*, as [k] *Ezra* saith: they must *beat downe the body, and bring it into subjection*, as [l] *Paul* did: for

How examples are a rule.

In performing a religious fast, three things.

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[a] Hest. 4. 16.

[b] 2 Sam. 12. 16, 17, 20.

Tollet Instr. Sacer. l. 6. c. 1.

[c] Dan. 10. 3.

[d] Job 2. 12.

[e] Neh. 9. 1.

[f] 2 Sam. 12. 16. Joel 1. 13.

[g] Joel 2. 16.

[h] Joel 1. 11, 13.

[i] Lev. 16. 29.

[k] Ezr. 8. 21.

[l] 1 Cor. 9. 27.

though

The end of a religious fast.

1 Joel 2. 7

though *Ahabs* fasting was but outward, yet thus hee humbled himselfe before the Lord, 1 King. 21. 27, 29. Gods children therefore must use in their religious fasts, that their bodies be humbled with their soules. Here indeed care must be had, that in humbling our bodies wee destroy not nature, or so weaken our strength, that wee disable our selves to serve God in our callings afterward; such *afflicting of the bodie* the Apostle disalloweth, Col. 2. 23.

III. Point. Touching the *right ends of a religious fast*: which be foure especially: 1. To be a spurre and provocation to true humiliation and repentance: for this cause the [m] *Ninevites did not only fast themselves, but caused their beasts to be without food and water*, that by hearing their lowing and bleating for meat, they might more deeply be humbled by the consideration of the desert of their owne sinnes, and so more unfainedly repent. This stands with good reason: for a mans abating and pinching of his bodie, shewes him his unworthinesse of the comforts of Gods creatures by reason of his sinnes: it leads him to see his desert of Gods wrath by reason of his transgressions: and so his heart is more deeply stricken with conscience of his owne sinnes: whereupon hee doth more freely confesse them unto God, and more carefully turne from them afterward.

2

II. A religious fast serves for an outward testimony and profession of our humiliation and repentance: for by our abstinence from the delights of nature, and the comforts of the creatures, wee solemnly professe our unworthinesse thereof, and of all Gods blessings: for this the Lord bids, *proclaime a fast*, when hee would have his people to testifie their humiliation.

Joel 1. 14.

3

III. It serves to subdue the flesh, and the corruption of nature: this end is necessarie, for the foule worketh by the bodie, the inclination of the affections is greatly swaied by the bodily constitution, and the soule is stained with many sinnes, by reason of the distemper of the bodie. But yet this end is not so generall as the two former: for there be two sorts of men in Gods Church; some of so weake a constitution of bodie, that their ordinarie sobrietie and temperance in diet, doth sufficiently subdue the rebellion of their flesh; now these need not to fast for this end: others there bee, whom ordinarie temperance and sobrietie will not serve to tame the rebellion of their flesh, and these are they that must use religious fasting, for the subduing of the flesh to the spirit, besides their ordinarie moderation in diet. IV. Fasting serves to prepare us unto prayer, and to further us therein: for first, it causeth watchfulnesse, and cuts off drowsinesse, and so makes a man the more lively and fresh in prayer; whereupon our Saviour often joynes these together, [n] *Watch and pray.* Secondly, it makes us feele our wants and miseries, and so brings us to some confession of our sinnes; whereupon the heart is more deeply humbled, and so stirred up more fervently to

A call for mercie: and for this cause Scripture many times joynes prayer and fasting together.

IV. Point. The *causes or occasions* of a religious fast, which may justly move us thereunto: and they bee seven. *First*, when wee our selves have fallen into any grievous sinne or sinnes, wherewith our conscience accuseth us, and whereby we procure the wrath of God against us: then to reforme our selves, and to escape the wrath of God, wee have need to give our selves to prayer and fasting: 1 Sam. 7. 6. *The Israelites having fallen to idolatrie, put away their strange gods, and turned unto the Lord with weeping and fasting*: And when they kept the feast of *Expiation*, which was a type of their forgivenesse by the *Messias*, *then they humbled themselves in fasting before the Lord*, Levit. 16. 29. *Secondly*, when some among us fall into any grievous sinne, though wee our selves be cleare from it, yet then we must fast, because for the sinnes of others, Gods judgements may justly fall upon us. Hence it was that *Paul* blames the Corinthians, [o] because *they sorrowed not for the sinne of incest committed among them.* And in this regard, every godly person ought to humble himselfe, because of the grievous sinnes of atheisme, blasphemy, oppression, &c. which abound among us. *Thirdly*, when the hand of God in any judgement lies upon us: so did the [p] Israelites, *when they fell in battell before the Benjamites*: and so ought we to doe for many judgements of God that have lainc long upon us. *Fourthly*, when the hand of God in any fearefull judgement lies heavy on others, among whom wee live, though we our selves be free: in this case *David* oftimes humbled himselfe, not only when his *child gotten in adultery was sicke*, 2 Sam. 12. 16. but even when his *enemies were sicke he fasted*, Psal. 35. 13. *Fifthly*, when Gods judgements are imminent, and as it were hang over our heads: so did *Iehosaphat* [q] when his enemies came against his country: and in this regard wee ought to humble our selves, for the professed enemies of Gods grace are daily plotting our subversion. *Sixthly*, when wee stand in need of some needfull blessing of God, especially such as concerne salvation: thus [r] *Cornelius* besought the Lord in prayer and fasting, when hee desired true resolution concerning the *Messias*; and so ought we to doe, to get assurance of our reconciliation with God, in the pardon of our sinnes. *Seventhly*, for Gods blessing and good successe upon the ministerie of the Gospell: so did the Church for *Paul* and *Barnabas*, when they sent them to preach, Act. 13. 2. and so ought wee to doe at this day. These bee the just occasions of fasting mentioned in the Word, whereto wee may referre thereof: and when any of these befall particular persons, families, congregations, cities, countries, or kingdomes, then they ought to humble themselves in fasting, before the Lord.

[m] Mar. 13. 33.

[o] 2 Cor. 5. 2.

[p] 1 Sam. 7. 6.

[q] 2 Chr. 20. 3.

[r] Act. 10. 30.

V. Point.

The time of a religious faſt.

[c] Lev. 16. 29.

V. Point. The *time of a religious faſt*: this now is free in regard of conſcience. Indeed in the old Teſtament, they had a ſet time of faſting, to wit, *the tenth day of the ſeventh moneth*: but in the new Teſtament there is no ſet time which bindes the conſcience; only men muſt faſt as juſt occaſion is offered. If it be ſaid, that divers reformed Churches have ſet times of faſting: I anſwer, theſe faſts are ſet for orders ſake, and not to binde conſcience, and they are civill faſts and not religious, for the Church may alter them at her pleaſure. The time of a religious faſt, is the time of mourning, which is uncertaine unto any Church, and therefore the time thereof cannot bee ſet; which muſt be marked, becauſe the Church of Rome doth herein erre, in that they binde mens conſciences to their ſet times of religious faſts. *Tollet. inſtr. Sacerd. l. 6. c. 2.*

Follam. de bon. operib. parti. l. 2. c. 7.

The kinds of a religious faſt.

VI. Point. The kinds of a religious faſt: and they are two; private, and publike. *A private faſt* is that which is performed privately, either by one man alone, for ſome of the forenamed occaſions peculiar to himſelfe, as *Cornelius* did (Act. 10. 30.) when he deſired to know the true *Meſſiah*; or by a private family, upon peculiar cauſes moving them thereto, and ſo did *Heſter* faſt with her Maids, Heſt. 4. 16. This faſt was foretold by [a] *Zacharie, The land ſhall bewaile, every family apart, the family of the houſe of David apart, and their wives apart, &c.* A *publike faſt* is that which is performed publikely, by divers families aſſembling, in one or in many congregations: and this publike faſt is appointed partly by the Church, and partly by the Magiſtrate: the [b] *Church muſt judge of the time and occaſion thereof*; and the [c] *Magiſtrate muſt authorize and proclaime it.* Againe, a religious faſt may bee diſtinguiſhed otherwayes, in reſpect of the time of continuance, and manner of abſtinence therein: for ſometime a religious faſt is only from one meale for one day, as Judg. 20. 26. ſometime it is from one meale for many dayes together, as 1 Sam. 31. 13. they faſted ſeven dayes together for *Saul* and *Jonathan*; abſtaining from their dinners, and taking ſome refeſhing in the evening: and ſo *Daniel faſted for three weekes of dayes*, that is, each day from morning till night, Dan. 10. 3. And ſometime it is from all kinde of ſuſtenance for many dayes together; ſo *Heſter and her maids faſted three dayes*, Heſt. 4. 16. Now the two former may be uſed of us as occaſion ſerveth; but this laſt is verie dangerous: for it is not with us in this regard, as it was with the Jewes; they lived in hot countries, and ſo had cold ſtomacks, by reaſon whereof, they might faſt three dayes without any great inconvenience: but we that live in colder climates, have hotter ſtomacks, and ſo have need of more and oftner refeſhing than they had; neither can we faſt ſo long without endangering life and health: now faſting muſt bee to humble and afflict the body, but not to deſtroy it.

[a] Zach. 12. 12.

[b] Joel 1. 14.
[c] Jon. 3. 7.
2. Chr. 20. 3.

A This much of faſting in generall: now I come to Chriſts doctrine of faſting here propounded. And firſt, of his reformation of the abuſes thereof then uſed among the Jewes: *When yee faſt, looke not as the hypocrites, &c. Queſt.* How doth this agree with the commandement of God, Joel 1. 13, 14. where he bids them *howle and crie in their faſt*, which cannot bee without a mourneſull countenance; and indeed in a true faſt rightly celebrated, the ſorrow of the heart muſt needs bee teſtified by ſome convenient ſignes and geſture in the bodie. *Anſw.* Chriſt doth not here ſimply condemne a ſorrowfull countenance in faſting, when as juſt occaſion of ſorrow therein is offered: for [a] *Nehemiah looked ſad*: but only the B hypocriſie of the Phariſies, who when they faſted had a ſad countenance, without a ſorrowfull heart: for all their heavie looke, they had no broken ſpirits: this therefore Chriſt ſaith, carrie not a ſad and heavie looke, when thou haſt no ſorrowfull mourning heart; minde not thine outward countenance, in reſpect of thy heart and conſcience. *For they diſfigure their faces, &c.* This alſo may ſeeme not blameworthy, for Gods children have in their faſts divers wayes diſfigured their faces, and beene approved: *Ezra* [b] *plucks off the haire of his head, and of his beard*: and [c] *Joſhua and the Iſraelites fell to the ground upon their faces, and put duſt upon their heads*, which could not but diſfigure their faces. *Anſ.* The Phariſes are blamed C for diſfiguring their faces, in divers reſpects, and that juſtly; for firſt, this was the chiefe and only thing they looked to in their faſts, even the outward ſhew thereof, which God hateth. Againe, the word tranſlated *diſfigure*, ſignifieth the very aboliſhing of their favour and viſage, which is far more than the ancient Jewes ever uſed to doe: they indeed humbled their bodies, and teſtified their ſorrow which God approved; but they ſought not to deforme their naturall complexion, they pined not themſelves to make their faces pale, that ſo men might the better take notice of their much faſting, as theſe Phariſes did: and ſuch were they in *Pauls* time, *who ſpared not their bodies*, Col. 2. 23. Thus much for the meaning.

Matth. 6. verſ. 16.

[a] Neh. 2. 2.

[b] Ezra 9. 3.
[c] Ioſh. 7. 6.

diſfigure.

D The words thus explaned containe two parts; a commandement, and a reaſon thereof. The commandement forbiddeth fained mourning in faſting, *Looke not as the hypocrites*: as if hee ſhould ſay, The hypocriticall Scribes and Phariſes when they faſt, make an outward ſhew of contrition and ſorrow, when as indeed their hearts are no whit humbled; but you ſhall not doe ſo. The reaſon of the former prohibition, is drawne from the practice of hypocrites, which is ſet out by the end and fruit thereof: their practice is to *diſfigure their faces*, therein is all their ſorrow: their end is oſtentation, *that they might be ſeene unto men to faſt.* And the fruit is anſwerable, *Verely I ſay unto you, they have their reward*: that is, reputation and

praiſe

praiſe of men. Thus when wee ſee that Chriſt condemnes not religious faſting, nor godly ſorrow therein, no nor yet the ſeemely ſignes of godly ſorrow; but onely hypocriticall faſting, when men have mournfull looks without humble and contrite hearts.

Luk. 18. 11.

The Uſes. I. Here obſerve the practice of theſe Scribes and Phariſes in Chriſts time: they did not onely faſt often, as twice a weeke, but they were carefull in obſerving all outward rites and ſignes pertaining to a religious faſt: yet as in the two former duties of Almes-deeds, and prayer, ſo in this, the principall thing is wanting; that is, truth and ſincerity of heart; for their ſowre looks came not from ſorrowfull hearts: they were whole and righteous in their owne conceit, and ſo needed not the Phyſician Chriſt Jeſus, nor amendment of life. Now in them we may ſee a true patterne of the property of naturall men in matters of Religion: they more buſie themſelves about the outward worke, than inward truth; they content themſelves with outward rites and ceremonies, and little regard the true worſhip of the heart. See this in [b] *Ahab*, who humbled himſelfe outwardly in great meaſure, for feare of puniſhment, but hee contented himſelfe therewith, and never came to true humiliation of heart, in ſorrow for ſinne, for hee continued ſtill in his old ſinnes: and the Iſraelites, both in the wildernesse, and in the land of Canaan, when God afflicted them, would humble themſelves and ſeeke his favour; but yet not in conſtant ſincerity and truth: for as [c] *David*'s faith, *They flattered him with their mouth: —for their heart was not upright with him*: they performed the outward ceremonies, and [d] ſo *drew neere to God with their lippes, but their heart was farre from him.* And thus it goeth generally with naturall men: the whole religion of the Papiſts ſtands in outward ceremoniall actions, partly Jewiſh, and partly Heatheniſh; and when they have obſerved them, they looke no further. And ſo it fareth with many among us, that profeſſe true religion; for the ignorant ſort (which are very many every where) content themſelves with the outward actions of religion; as comming to Church, hearing the Word read, and ſometime preached, and receiving the Sacrament once or twice a yeare; and when the worke is done (though without underſtanding) yet all is well, they thinke God is ſerved well enough. Yea, many that have knowledge doe yet reſt in the outward actions of religion; for doe not ſome eſteeme the conſcionable endevour of morall obedience to bee but preciſeneſſe? and ſo though they beare ſome ſhew of religion, yet they reproach the power of it in others. And another ſort doe onely ſo farre forth maintaine and profeſſe religion, as it ſtandeth with the good of their outward eſtate, and their peaceable fruition of wealth, honour, and delights, and ſo make a policy of religion and piety. But let all theſe take heed unto their

Mans behaviour naturally in matters of religion.

[b] 1 King. 21. 29.

[c] Pſal. 78. 34, 36, 37

[d] Iſa. 29. 13.

Three ſorts corrupt in religion.
1
2
3

A ſoules, and betime repent, for theſe practices make them hypocrites in religion, whoſe end will be damnation; and therefore bring thy heart to God with thy outward worſhip, and content not thy ſelfe with the ſhew of godlineſſe, but get the power of it, and ſhew it in thy converſation; and embrace religion for it ſelfe, and not for the world.

Secondly, is the Phariſes faſting condemned of Chriſt, becauſe they reſted in the outward worke, and did it in oſtentation, for the praiſe of men? then doubtleſſe Popiſh faſting is abhominable, becauſe it abounderh with more abuſes: For I. in their religious faſts they allow one meale, ſo it be not fleſh; and beſides that, drinking of any kinde of wines, or drinkes, taking of electuaries, and ſtrong waters, conſerves and ſuch like, at any time of the day; which is a mock-faſt, and nothing elſe. II. They make diſtinction of meats neceſſary to a faſt, and that not for evill ends, as Magiſtrates may doe; or for temperance ſake, as private men may doe: but for conſcience ſake, which is *a doctrine of devils*, as the [a] Apoſtle ſaith. 1. I. They binde men in conſcience to many ſet dayes of faſting, and make the omiſſion thereof a deadly ſinne; wherein they take away our Chriſtian libertie: for there was no want of care in our Saviour Chriſt, to appoint all good meanes for mortifying of the fleſh, and yet hee preſcribed no ſet faſts in the new Teſtament. IV. They make faſting meritorious, teaching, that a man thereby may ſatisfie Gods juſtice; whereby they doe blaſphemouſly derogate from the all-ſufficiencie of Chriſts obedience and paſſion. Now ſith they have thus defaced religious faſting, let us learne by Chriſts command, not to faſt as the Papiſts doe.

Popiſh faſting is abhominable.
Reaſons.
1
Aquin. 2. 2. q. 147. a. 6. 8.
Navar. c. 22. n. 13, 14, 15.
2
Bellarm. de bon. oper. in parti. l. 2. c. 5. and 7.
[a] 1 Tim. 4. 3.
3
Tollet. inſtr. Sacerd. l. 6. c. 4.
4
Tollet. inſtr. Sacerd. l. 6. c. 6.

Thirdly, Chriſt ſaying to his Diſciples, *when ye faſt*, takes it for granted, that ſometimes they faſted, and ſo ought to doe: and here he blames the Phariſes, not for faſting ſimply, but for their hypocriſie therein: whereby wee ſee that Chriſt requires of all the godly, that when juſt occaſion is offered, they ſhould faſt, either publikely, or in private. And if Chriſt blame the Phariſes for their bad manner of faſting, then much more will hee blame them that faſt not at all, though never ſo juſt occaſion bee given unto them: for in this caſe it is not a thing indifferent, but neceſſary: for the want whereof, God doth many times renue and increaſe his judgements, as we may ſee, Iſa. 22. 12, 13, 14. Wherefore to move our hearts hereunto, let us conſider theſe reaſons: *Firſt*, we have herein the worthy preſident of moſt holy men in times paſt, who carefully performed this duty, when occaſion was offered; as *David, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, our Saviour Chriſt, and his Apoſtles*, eſpecially [a] *Paul*, who faſted often: now their examples muſt be a cloud of witneſſes unto us, for we come farre ſhort of them in many graces of God, and in obedience, and therefore had more need to humble our ſelves. *Secondly*,

Chriſt requires faſting on juſt occaſion.

Motivers to faſting.
1
[a] 2 Cor. 11. 27.

2 Occasions of fasting.

1

2

3

4

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Secondly, we have among us continuall occasions of fasting, both in publike and private: as, I. Gods judgements present; for when have wee beene free from some one of these, either famine, or pestilence, or unseasonable weather? II. Gods judgements imminent and hanging over our heads; for our professed enemies watch for our subversion, and we are in danger to have the kingdome of heaven taken from us, in the power of the Gospell, the comfort of prayer, and of the Sacraments, because we doe not bring forth the fruits thereof. III. Wee have our owne corrupt natures to subdue, and many sins to breake off, with particular judgements upon our selves to remove; for any one whereof wee have great need to fast often. IV. Though we had no such cause in regard of our selves, yet the horrible sinnes that abound in our land, are cause sufficient to bring us on our knees. *Paul[c] feared hee should bee humbled at Corinth, in bewailing many that had sinned:* and shall not the common Atheisme, the contempt of Gods word and judgements, the blasphemies, oppression, and fearefull security of this age cause us to waile and mourne? V. Wee should oft humble our selves for the Church of God; and for the continuance of the Gospell in sinceritie among us, and to our posteritie: hereby we shall best expresse *zeale for Gods house*, which should *eat us up*, as it is said of [d] *Christ*, *and of* [e] *David: Gods Ierusalem should be our* [f] *chiefe joy:* and we must testifie it by [g] *praying for the peace thereof: Christ prayed and* [h] *fasted when he chose his Apostles for the planting of his Church:* much more therefore must we doe it for the continuance of it.

[c] 2 Cor. 12. 21.

[d] Joh. 2. 17.

[e] Psal. 69. 10.

[f] Psal. 137. 6.

[g] Psal. 122. 6.

[h] Luk. 6. 12. 13.

Fourthly, Christ here disallowes not only the affectation of praise in these Pharises, but the disfiguring of their faces by a kinde of pining of themselves; whereby hee would teach us, that a true fast stands not in the afflicting and weakning of the bodie. Now albeit few offend this way at this day, for most are given too much to pamper the flesh; yet here may fitly be shewed, what care men ought to have of their bodies. And first of all, a two-fold care must be avoided; as well *an immoderate care to pamper the bodie with meat and drinke*, for that makes the heart heavie, and the head drousie, and hereby lust is kindled, and sinne cherished; which the Apostle forbids, Rom. 13. 14. as also *too little care*, whereby the bodie is pined and pulled downe to overmuch weaknesse, which is one thing here reproved. The *care required* is that moderate regard unto the bodie, whereby it is so sustained by meat and drinke, that it may always become the temple of the Holy Ghost, and a fit instrument for the soule unto workes of righteousnesse, and the worship of God. Now hee that would thus order his bodie, must doe two things: First, he must observe perpetuall temperance in food and rayment, taking that which may well suffice nature, but not fulfill the lusts thereof. Secondly,

Of care for the bodie.

A if this will not serve to subdue the flesh, but that it will still rebell against the law of the spirit of life, (as in some it will not) then fasting must be used, in which the bodie is to be afflicted, and the soule humbled, for the subduing of the rebellious flesh: but yet herein we must beware, that we destroy not our health, our strength, or our constitution; for thus we neglect our life, which is a sinne of murther: wherein (though few) yet some doe offend, who in the meane time live in the practice of foule and grosse sins otherwayes.

Fifthly, here note how farre the Pharisees goe in outward humiliation: they are content to afflict their bodies, even to the disfiguring of their complexion; but yet they will not repent and leave their sinnes, no though *Iohn Baptist* B and Christ preach repentance unto them: wherin behold the propertie of our corrupt nature in Gods service: if outward actions and bodily exercises will serve the turne, we can be content to bestow much cost, to take great paines, and to endure some affliction; but yet still we desire to live in our sinnes. This is evident in Poperie, for who are more austere to their owne bodies, in watchings, wandring, in whipping themselves, fasting, &c? and yet where is more abhominable filthinesse than among them? and this makes that religion so embraced, because in dispensing with sinne, for the performance of these bodily actions, it fits so well to our corrupt nature. Wherefore let us C take notice of this our corruption, and though we must not neglect the humbling of the body upon just occasion; yet let us principally look to the mortifying of sinne, and the obedience of the heart.

Outward exercises more embraced than weightier duties.

V. 17 *But when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face.*

18 *That thou seeme not unto men to fast, but unto thy father which is in secret; and D thy father which seeth in secret, will reward thee openly.*

Christ the true Doctor of his Church, having in the former verse sought to reforme the exercise of Fasting, from Pharisaicall abuses, doth in these two verses seeke to restore the same to his right use; not so much intending to command us to fast, as to bring us to the right manner of fasting.

The Exposition. When thou fastest, &c. It seemeth that Christ here speaketh especially of a private fast: for besides that he useth words of the singular number, *Thou, Thine, &c.* he injoyneth

neth the concealing of it from others, which cannot bee done in a publike fast: and yet the maine thing here injoyned, is the approbation of the heart unto God, which must be observed in all religious fasts, as well publike as private. *Anoint thine head, and wash thy face:* Here Christ alludeth to the custome of the Jewes, who to show their cheerefulnesse, used to anoint their heads with sweet oyntments, and to wash their faces; as wee may see by *Naomies* command to [a] *Ruth*, and by [b] *Davids* practice, when he perceived his childe was dead, and would testifie that hee had ceased from mourning for it: as also by the speech of Christ, pacifying the woman that anointed his feet with oyntment, *Mine*[c] *head thou diddest not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment:* for as *David* saith, *God gives oyle to make the face to shine*, Psal. 104. 15. But yet these words are not to be taken properly, neither doe they bind us to anoint our heads when we fast, as may appeare by these reasons: 1. If the words should bee taken properly, then should Christ condemne all the fasts of holy men in the old Testament, who did neither oyntments nor washings, but abstained from all such bodily delights for that time. 2. Christ should commaud contraries, namely, the use of such things in fasting, as were more proper to feasting, wherein men use to bee joyfull and cheerefull. 3. Hee should injoyne that to some countries, which were not in their power, or at least could not bee used of them without excessive charges; as in this or other cold countries, where sweet oyles are rare and costly. The true meaning therefore must bee gathered out of the circumstances of the place: now Christs intent is here, as in the former points of Almesdeeds and prayer, *to preferrie unto men the approving of their hearts unto God in fasting, by avoyding ostentation therein, and desire of the praise of men:* and therefore he names such behaviour, as doth no way intimate a fast unto others; meaning thereby, that wee should conceale our private fasts from men: as if he should say, *When thou fastest privately, so carrie thy selfe, that it may not appeare to men that thou fastest, and in all thy fasts seeke only to approve thy heart unto God.*

[a] Ruth 3. 3.

[b] 2 Sam. 12. 20.

[c] Luk. 7. 46.

The words thus explained containe two parts; a *commandement*, and a *reason* thereof. The *commandement* is two-fold: First, that we should conceale our fasts from men, intimated by *wash thy face, and anoint thy head:* Secondly, that we should seeke to approve our selves, not to men, but to God in our religious fasts, in these words, *That thou seeme not to men to fast, but to thy father which is in secret.* In this first branch of this commandement we may learne, that the private worship of God must bee performed privately unto God, and concealed from men: for that which is here said of private fasting, which is a meanes to further our prayers, is true of prayer itselfe, and of every part of

That secret worship of God is to be concealed.

A Gods private worship, for there is the same reason of all: as may thus appeare; First, in all actions of Gods worship, there must bee observed an holy comelinesse and decencie, which is then done, when they bee performed with fit and convenient circumstances; that is, publike actions of worship, with publike circumstances; and private actions, with private circumstances: as publike prayer must bee made of a publike person in a publike place, with an audible and loud voice; and private prayer must bee made in a private place, by private persons, with a still and low voice, and other seemely private gestures. Secondly, when private worship is performed with publike circumstances, there are many occasions given to ambition, pride, and hypocrisie; but being done privately, these occasions are prevented, and the heart is more free to seeke the approbation of God only.

This doctrine serves to direct our practice in Gods worship; as first, that we must not reserve our private preparation to Gods publike worship, till we come to the publike congregation; but prepare our selves at home privately in our chamber or closet: for thought to pray everie where bee lawfull, yet because convenient circumstances must bee observed in all our actions of worship, therefore private prayer in a publike place is not so seemly nor convenient; for publike circumstances doe not beseeme private worship. *Quest.* What if a man wanted time, or had forgot to prepare himselfe before hand? *Answ.* Slight pretences cannot justifie any disorder in Gods worship: and yet if a man will needs there performe his private preparation, he must conceale all outward signes of prayer, and only lift up his heart unto God: for a good duttie may become offensive by inconvenient circumstances. Secondly, this shewes how Christian fasters must order their private exercises of religion, namely so privately for voice and gesture, that they may conceale the same from others, beside their family present: and so must particular persons praying alone, observe such circumstances as may conceale their prayers from others: for all occasions of ostentation must bee avoided, that so the heart may apply itself wholly towards the Lord.

Of private preparation to Gods publike worship.

2 How private fasts must worship God.

D *That thou seeme not to men to fast.*] This is the second branch of Christs commandement, wherein we learne a second duttie in a religious fast; namely, *that therein wee seeke to approve ourselves and our actions only to God:* for which end, wee must observe three things. 1. With our fasting wee must joyne a conversion of our heart from sinne unto God: Joel 2. 12. *Turne you unto me with all your hearts, and with fasting:* there God hath joyned them together, and they may not be severed. Now that our hearts may turne to God in fasting, wee must have especiall regard to our behaviour both *before, in,* and *after our fast*, whether publike or private. *Before the fast*, wee must prepare our selves

How the heart must be approved to God in fasting, and how.

thereto in an holy manner, by a serious consideration of the causes and occasions of our fast: a worthy example hereof we have in [a] *Iehoshaphat*, who considering a feareful judgement to be at hand, in the approaching of his enemies, was sore afraid, and thereupon set his heart to seeke the Lord, and proclaimed a fast. *In fasting* wee must labour to have more tender affections, and deeper humiliation than ordinarie: 1 Sam. 7.6. the Israelites humbling themselves in fasting for their idolatrie in *Mizpah, drew water, and powred it out before the Lord*: which words import their deepe humiliation, whether it were by abundant weeping, (as some expound the place) or by powring out water indeed, to signifie, that they powred out their soules before the Lord. *After the fast* we must labour for reformation and amendment of life, that our behaviour both towards God and man, may be everie way better than before. A notable example hereof, we have in the Jewes, who having renued their *covenant with God*, upon their [a] humiliation, did not only [b] *write it*, and [c] *seale unto it*; but *bound themselves thereto by* [d] *curse and oath*. 2. That we approve our selves and our action to God in fasting, we must be sure we propound unto our selves therein the right ends of a religious fast, which wee have before propounded: for if we faile therein, and propound other ends unto our selves, wee corrupt the whole action unto our selves. 3. With our fasting we must joyne the duties of the second Table, in the works of justice, mercie, and love to our brethren: for without these, our love to God is not sincere: nay, God rejects that bodily humiliation, which is severed from the exercise of mercie and compassion, as wee may see at large, Isa. 58. 3,4. &c. I shewed before that we had just cause to humble our selves; which when we doe, we must be carefull thus to approve our hearts unto God.

a 2 Chron. 20. 3.

a Nehem. 9.1.
b Nehem. 9. 38.
c chap. 10.1.
d vers. 29.

Thus much of the commandement: now followeth the reason thereof, drawen from the promise of Gods reward to them that fast in an holy manner: *And thy father which seeth in secret, will reward thee openly*: that is, *seeing thee intend only to approve thine heart and action unto God in fasting, will give thee an open reward at the last day.*

Popish conclusions.

I Bellarm. de bon. oper. in parti. l. 2. c. 6, & 12.

This Text the Papists doe notably abuse, to prove two heretical conclusions touching fasting, First, *that fasting in it selfe for any good end, is a part of Gods worship*, because it hath a promise of open reward, even life everlasting, made unto it, as before was made to prayer and Almes-deeds; and therefore must needs bee of the same nature with them: for things indifferent, and bodily exercises, profit little; that which hath the promise is a part of godlinesse, 1 Tim.4.8. *Ans.* This promise is made to him that fasteth, not to the worke; and that not simply for his exercise of fasting, but for his repentance, conversion, and invocation, which goe with fasting, and are furthered thereby. But they alleage, that [c] *Anna served God with fasting and with prayer*. *Ans.* In the old Testament, fasting was a part of Gods worship; for it was commanded to be performed *the tenth day of the seventh moneth*: and then also was the making and performing of vowes, a part of religious worship commanded of God. Now in all likelihood *Annah* had bound her selfe by vow to God, to that course of prayer and fasting, and therefore was approved of God therein. But now in the new Testament, wee have no commandement for set fasts or vowes: and therefore the case is not the same, and so her example cannot prove the thing for which they alleage it: indeed we have the vow of moral obedience made in baptisme, but that everie one is bound to performe that takes God for his God, though he should not vow it. Againe, a man may bee said to serve God in prayer and fasting as *Annah* did, because prayer is a true part of Gods worship; and though fasting in it selfe bee not the worship of God, yet being joyned with prayer, it is a notable furtherance thereunto: and being so performed upon just occasion, it is a part of his worship, because hee requires it.

Matth.6. vers.17,18.

c Luk.2.37.

The second conclusion which the Papists would gather hence, is; *that Fasting satisfieth Gods justice, and merits remission of sinnes, and life everlasting*; because this promise of open reward is here made unto it. *Answ.* We must know, that the promises of God for remission of sinnes and life everlasting, being grounded upon Christ, are only made to them that be regenerate and beleeve in Christ; and so they are not made to him for his works sake, but for his faith whereby he is in Christ, and so indeed are made unto him for Christs sake only, in whom we grant, that God of his free grace makes himselfe a debter by his promise to everie beleever that doth any good worke: yet the debt is not due to us for any thing we do, but due to Christ who hath merited it, and in Christ due to us. But it will be said, that workes are oft mentioned with Gods promises, and especially faith, which is a worke. *Ans.* True: but yet the reward promised is not given for works sake, nor yet for faith; but for Christs sake, whose merit imputed to us is received by faith, which faith we testifie by works: and so according to our faith and works, we receive a reward of God, but not for them: as Christ said to the Centurion, [f] *As thou hast beleeved, so be it unto thee*. Thus then must wee conceive of this promise made to fasting; though in it selfe it be a bodily exercise; yet being done in obedience to God upon just occasion, by him that beleeveth in Christ, and being joyned with prayer and conversion to God, it is a worke of faith, and shall have a reward.

II. Popish conclusion. Bellarm. de bon. oper. in parti. l. 2. c. 12.

f Matth.8.13. How fasting shall have a reward.

Now this gracious promise made to fasting in this holy manner, must stire us up to a love of this exercise, and to the practice of it, so oft as just occasion is given. And undoubtedly one speciall

speciall cause of the continuall renuing of Gods Judgements among us is, because we humble not our selves by prayer and fasting under Gods mightie hand. It were therefore to be wished, in regard of the manifold just occasions, that publike fasts were more often commanded by publike authoritie, and private fasts more conscionably used in every family.

And thus much of the fourth part of Christs Sermon, containing a reformation of abuses in Almes, Prayer, and Fasting: out of all which we must learne this one thing which Christ principally intends; to wit, *in all holy duties to avoid hypocrisie, endevouring to doe them with that simplicitie and sincerite of heart, whereby we truely desire to have God and not man the seer and approver of them.* And so shall our workes be not onely good in themselves, but in us, and acceptable unto God: otherwise, if we doe them in ostentation, or for other sinister respects, the hypocrisie of our hearts defiles our good workes, and so makes them unacceptable unto God, and unprofitable to our selves.

v. 19 *Lay not up treasures for your selves upon the earth, where the moath and canker corrupt, and where theeves dig thorow and steale.*

20 *But lay up treasures for your selves in heaven, where neither the moath nor canker corrupteth, and where theeves neither dig thorow, nor steale.*

The fifth part of Christs Sermon.

Here beginneth the fifth part of this excellent Sermon, and it continueth to the end of this chapter; wherein our Saviour Christ intendeth *to reforme his hearers of covetousnesse*, and to worke in their hearts a moderate care and desire of worldly things. Now the order of this discourse is this; First, he layes downe the substance of his persuasion, and then enforceth and amplifieth the same. The ground and substance of Christs persuasion, consists in a double commandement: the first shewes what we must not doe in respect of treasures, v.19. the second, what we must doe, v.20. both which he enforceth by their severall reasons, in the same verses: as also with a reason common to them both, vers.21.

Sermon explan.

For the first commandement, *Lay not up treasures, &c. The meaning.* The word here translated *lay up*, is more significant in the originall, than our English doth expresse; for it imports two things: First, to *gather together*: secondly, to *hoord or heape up in store* things gathered, against the time to come; so Rom. 2.5. *Thou heapest up unto thy selfe, &c. Treasures*, that is, worldly wealth in abundance, pretious things stored up; as silver, gold, pearls, &c. *Upon earth*: here Christ aimes not so much at the place, as at the kinde of treasures; for heavenly treasures may be laid up while we are here on earth: and therefore he forbids hoording of earthly treasures. *For your selves*: that is, respecting your private gaine and benefit, all respect to the good of the Church and Common-wealth laid aside. So then the words beare this sense, *Take heed that you gather not riches together, to hoord up here below, for your owne private use and benefit alone, making them your treasures in which you put your trust, and place your joy and delight.*

But yet that we may not mistake the meaning of our Saviour Christ, I will distinctly set downe what things Christ forbiddeth not, pertaining to the gathering or keeping of worldly goods; and then what it is which he doth directly forbid. There be three things respecting the world, which Christ forbiddeth not: *viz.* I. *Diligent labour in a mans vocation*, whereby he provides things needfull for himselfe, and those that depend upon him; for else he should be contrarie to himselfe, *injoyning man to eat his bread in the sweat of his face*, Genesis 3.19. and commanding that *he that will not labour, should not eat*, 2 Thes.3.10. II. *The fruition and possession of goods and riches*: for they are the good blessings of God being well used, and have beene possessed of Godes children, as *Abraham, Iob, Salomon. &c.* III. The gathering and laying up of treasures is not simply forbidden, for the word of God alloweth hereof in some respect, 2 Cor.12.14. *The father must lay up for the children*: and the Disciples understanding of the generall famine, by the prophecie of *Agabus*, which should be in all the World, [a] *gathered provision aforehand for the brethren in Judea*: and [b] *Iosephs provident wisdome* is commended by the holy Ghost, for hoording up the corne in Ægypt, against the time of dearth, for the common good: and the [c] *Temple of God had his treasurie* by Gods appointment, for the upholding and repaire thereof; so that Christ doth not simply forbid all gathering and laying up of treasure or wealth.

Three things allowed about wealth.

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a Act. 11.28. 29,30.
b Genes.41.48. Act. 7.10.
c 1 King. 7.5.

What is it then which Christ here forbids? *Ans.* Sundry practices of covetousnesse, whereof the first is *excessive seeking of worldly wealth*, when men keepe no measure nor moderation therein; although God give sufficient, yet they are not content, their desire is so insatiable. And that we may see the danger of this practice, I will here shew how farre forth a man may seeke for and lay up worldly wealth: for the better understanding whereof, this distinction of worldly goods must be laid downe for a ground; They are either *necessarie, abundant*, or *superfluous*. *Necessarie goods*, are of two sorts; either necessarie to mans nature, without which no man can live, nor family stand; as meat, drinke, apparell, lodging, &c. or necessarie to a mans state and condition of life, without

Practices of covetousnesse here forbidden.

How farre a man may seeke for worldly wealth.

Three degrees of worldly goods: 1. Necessarie.

which he cannot exercise the duties of his calling wherein God hath placed him; as bookes to a student, tooles to a trades-man, &c. Now here ariseth the question: How much of these things are to be counted necessarie, and so may be provided for, and laid up? *Ans.* The opinion and judgement of the covetous man must be no rule in this case; for his corrupt heart is unsatiable, like the sea which cannot be filled, *and like* [d] *the fire, that never saith, it is enough.* Now because of the diversitie of mens estates, by reason of their difference in properties and conditions, there can be no certaine rule set downe: for that which is enough for one, will not suffice another: and therefore the judgement and practice of the godly-wise, who know how to use the creatures as blessings of Gods providence, must be our rule to judge what is necessarie: other rules we have not in the Word, but what they judge needfull, according to the Word, that must be esteemed necessarie, and accordingly provided. Yet further this may here be added, that things must not be deemed necessarie, onely in regard of the present use, but also with respect to the time to come, wherein they may be needfull. *Example.* A trades-man having nothing besides his trade to live upon, may provide for things necessarie, while his strength continueth, to maintaine himselfe in old age, when through decay of strength or sight, he is not able to worke. And so a man having many children, may in the use of lawfull meanes, provide for their portions before-hand, that when their age requireth, he may therewith dispose of them in some good state of life. The second sort of worldly goods is *Abundance*, whereby I meane that plentie and store, which serves not onely for necessitie, but for holy comelinesse and delight. The third sort is *Superfluitie*, whereby I meane such abundance, as a man hath neither use of for the present, nor in any likelihood shall have for the time to come.

Now these grounds thus premised, I set downe this rule touching mans provision for worldly wealth. *Things necessarie for mans person and his calling, a man may seeke for and lay up; but for abundance, and for superfluities, no man ought to labour or be carefull:* hereto Christ hath put this barre, *Lay not up treasures for your selves:* and *Salomon* prayes as directly against superfluitie, as against povertie, Prov. 30. 8, 9. *Give me not riches nor povertie,* (saith he) *but feed me with food convenient for me:* and he renders this reason against abundance, *least I be full and denie thee, and say, who is the Lord?* Now hence I reason thus; looke what we may aske of God, that onely must we seeke for, and no more: but we may onely aske for things necessarie; for to pray for abundance we have no warrant, and therefore we must onely seeke for necessaries, and not for abundance. Hereto the Apostles rule agreeth well, [e] *If we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content: for they that would be rich or abound* (as the word signifieth) *fall into temptation and snares. Quest.* If we may not pray for abundance, what must we doe, if God give abundance? *Answ.* If God blesse us with abundance, upon our moderate labour and care in our lawfull callings, we must receive it thankfully, and as good stewards lay it up to be bestowed on good uses, either in our families, or in the Church and Common-wealth, as God in his providence shall offer us just occasion.

Now this being evident, that we must onely seeke for things necessarie, and no more; then we must all learne to beware of carking care, and be contented with things necessarie, when God gives them. And to move us hereunto, consider the reasons following: First, it is Gods commandement, that we should be contented with things necessarie, 1 Tim. 6. 8. and therefore we must make conscience of obedience in the practice of contentation. Secondly, they that are greedie after abundance, have many temptations to bad dealing, and so can hardly keepe a good conscience: *They fall into snares* (as the [f] Apostle saith) *and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which drowne men in perdition and destruction.* Thirdly, in time of persecution (which oft accompanies the Gospel) the richer a man is, the more danger he is in to forsake the truth; for the heart of man is naturally so glued to the World, that without Gods speciall grace, it will sooner forsake Christ, than worldly wealth: this we may see in *Demas*, who *to embrace the World, forsoke Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 10. whereupon Christ saith, *How hardly can a rich man enter into the kingdome of Heaven.* And thus much of the first practice of covetousnesse, which is excessive care and labour after worldly goods.

The second practice of covetousnesse which Christ here forbids, is *when men seeke onely or principally for worldly goods, neglecting spirituall graces in regard thereof.* This appeares by the opposition of the next verse unto this, *lay not up for your selves earthly treasures, but lay up for your selves treasures in heaven.* This was *Esaus* practice, *who sold his birthright for a messe of pottage*, Hebr. 12. 16. and the sinne of the Gadarens, that upon the losse of their swine, *desired Christ to goe out of their coasts*, Luke 8. 37. And this is the sinne of our age, wherein many things, nay, almost every thing, which may yeeld profit or delight, is cared for above the Word; or else how could there be so much preaching, and so little profiting, but that mens thoughts and delights are taken up with earthly things? but this is a preposterous and disordered care, which every one must labour to reforme, as Christ commands, verse 31.

The third practice of covetousnesse here forbidden, is *to put trust and confidence in worldly things treasured up:* this is the *Idolatrie of the heart*, for looke whereon a man sets his heart, that he makes his God, and therefore is *covetousnesse*

[d] Prov. 30. 16.

[e] 1 Tim. 6. 7, 8.

[f] 1 Tim. 6. 9.

covetousnesse called *idolatrie*, Colos. 3. 5. Hence it is that Christ makes it *so hard a thing for a rich man to enter into heaven*, Matth. 19. 23, 24. because *they* [h] *trust in their riches*: and if we marke well, we shall finde it commonly true, that rich men are proud hearted and secure, not regarding Gods Judgements, nor the meanes of their salvation; for *they* [h] *take not God for their strength, that trust in their riches. Davids* counsell therefore must be followed, [i] *If riches increase, set not your heart thereon.*

The fourth practice here forbidden, is *when men lay up for themselves onely, without regard to the Church or Common-wealth, or releefe of the poore.* This is a devilish practice: for every one is but a steward of that he hath, to dispense the same for Gods glory to the good of other. The poore are Gods poore, and members of his family, and therefore hee requires, that every steward in his family should see they have their portion: God will call the rich to the reckoning, when this will not be taken for good disposing, to say I kept my riches to my selfe: so much will the slothfull servant say, *that hides his talent in a napkin.* And therefore let us learne to make conscience hereof, with the rest of these bad practices.

Where the moath and canker corrupt, and where theeves digge thorow and steale. These words containe a speciall reason of the former commandement, to this effect: *Earthly treasures, as riches, raiment, &c. are subject to be carried away by theeves: and therefore we must not excessively or principally seeke after them, set our hearts upon them, or hoord them up for our selves.*

The Exposition. The word translated *moath*, signifieth a worme that eateth the finest cloth, and consumeth the best garment: yet here it must be taken more largely, for any worme that doth destroy or consume any creature. And so the word translated *canker*, must be largely taken, for any thing that by rust or fretting doth eat into and consume metall, or any other creature.

Here then Christ noteth a two-fold vanitie of the creatures, both in respect of their nature, and of abuse: for their nature, they are subject to corruption by rust, moath, and canker, be the creatures never so pure and costly, as gold, silver, pearles, &c. for the heavens themselves are subject to vanitie. And for abuse, they are subject to the injuries of ungodly persons, theeves may steale them, and covetous persons may hoord them up that they shall serve for no use. Now if all earthly treasures be subject to vanitie both by corruption and abuse, then we must not make them our chiefe creatures, but seeke for them, and use them in a moderate and sober manner. *Quest.* But whence came this vanitie upon the creatures? *Ans.* God hath subjected them unto it for the sinne of man, Rom. 8. 20.

The consideration hereof must let us see the grievousnesse of our sinnes, and the greatnesse of Gods anger due thereunto, in that he hath imprinted the stampe of his wrath upon every creature for the sinne of man, by subjecting it to this two-fold vanitie. And therefore when we see a moath upon apparell, or rust and canker upon metall, or other creatures corrupting them, we ought rather to be humbled for our sinnes, than to suffer our hearts to be drawne to immoderate desire and delight after earthly things. Secondly, are the creatures that never sinned, subject to vanitie for mans sinne? then how vaine a thing is man, that by his transgression bringeth vanitie upon the creatures? let us therefore in them behold our owne vanitie, and when we pitie them, learne to lament our owne iniquities.

v. 20 *But lay up treasures for your selves, &c.* Christ having shewed what we must not doe in respect of treasures here on earth, and knowing mans inclination to be such, that he will needs have something for his treasure, doth here come to the *second branch* of his commandement; shewing what treasure we must lay up for our selves, and enforcett us thereto by a speciall reason. The treasures we must lay up are *treasures in heaven. Quest.* How should we lay up treasures in heaven, for we cannot of our selves come there; no man can save himselfe; the beginning, progresse, and accomplishment of our salvation is of God in Christ wholly? *Ans.* It is usuall with God in Scripture, to ascribe the worke of the principall efficient cause, to the instrument thereof. This in the last verse of *Obadiah, Preachers, are expresly called Saviours*: and 1 Tim. 4. 16. *In doing this thou shalt both save thy selfe, and them that heare thee*: and 1 Cor. 4. 15. *I have begotten you through the Gospel*: and yet both salvation and regeneration are the workes of God alone, onely Preachers are the instruments thereof. So in this place, to make us rich with heavenly treasures, is the worke of God alone: for we rather *treasure up unto our selves wrath against the day of wrath*, by our transgressions: and yet because we are instruments by his grace in the use of meanes to get this treasure, therefore he giveth this commandement unto us, as though the wealth were wholly ours, though himselfe be the principall Author.

But yet that we may the better conceive of, and practice this commandement, two points are to be considered. *First*, what this treasure is: *Secondly*, how a man must lay it up for himselfe: both these we must marke with reverence, because they are points of great weight and moment, in the practice whereof standeth our salvation. For the first: In searching it out, we will first consider, what is erroneously thought to be this treasure which Christ would have us to lay up. The Church of Rome hath for many hundred yeares, abused the World here-abouts, making *the overplus of Christs merits, and of the merits of Saints and Martyrs, to be the trea-*

sure of the Church, which being gathered together and put into a store-chest, is (say they) in the Popes custodie; and he alone hath the plenary opening and shutting of this chest, and the ordering and disposing of these merits: by vertue whereof hee gives out Indulgences and Pardons, when and to whom hee will. And hereby indeed he maintaines and upholds his kingdome: for hereby comes infinite wealth and revenewes. But this cannot be the true treasure; nay, it is corrupt and deceitfull for two causes: for first, hereby they abase the true treasure which is Christs merits, by adding supply thereto from the merits of Saints: for if Christs merits receive increase from the merits of men, then it is not al-sufficient of it selfe, and so but a poore treasure. Secondly, hereby they make the merits of Saints departed, to be the merits of others which live long after them, by the Popes application; which is a thing impossible and absurd: for no man can merit of himselfe: but say he could, yet should his merits be for himselfe alone and for none other; for every man in regard of salvation is a private man, and the reward of his workes he doth that way can onely redound unto himselfe, onely Christ Jesus our Mediatour, God and man, who was by God himselfe made a publike person for this end, can merit for others.

Answ.

The true treasure.

The true treasure then (to let the other passe) is in a word, *the true God*, that one onely eternall essence in three persons, who made all things, and governs all things; in him alone is all goodnesse and happinesse to be found, Gen.15.1. *I am thy buckler, and thine exceeding great reward*, saith God to *Abraham*: and Psal.16.5,6. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance* (saith *David*) --- *I have a goodly heritage*: which is as much as if he had said, *The Lord is my treasure*. I will not stand on this, for men by the light of nature have seene and said thus much. This rather is to be considered, how God becomes our treasure: And for this end we must conceive of God, as he hath revealed himselfe unto us in Christ: for out of Christ he is not our God, and so not our treasure; but God incarnate is our treasure: Col.2.3. *In whom*, that is, *in Christ, are hid all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge*: Col.2.3. *Our life*, even eternall life, *is hid with Christ in God*, as in a treasure. 1 Cor.1.21. *Christ is made unto us of God wisdome, righteousnesse, sanctification, and redemption*: and John 1.16. *Of his fulnesse*, as out of a full treasure, *we all receive grace for grace*. Now we must not rest in his incarnation, but conceive further of him as he was crucified for us in our nature, and is set forth unto us in his Word and Sacraments: for his *obedience, death and passion is our treasure*, which is revealed and applyed in the Word of promise, and in the Sacraments: and *this is that thing prepared of God for them that love him, which eye hath not seene, eare hath not heard, neither ever entred into the heart of naturall man to conceive*, 1 Corinth.2.9. But

How God is our treasure.

A why (will some say) should Christ crucified be called our treasure? *Answ.* Because he is the fountaine and store-house of all true blessings conveyed from God to man. Wouldest thou have remission of sinne, and righteousnesse with God? why, *Christ was made sinne for us, that we might be made the righteousnesse of God in him*, 2 Cor.5.12. Wouldest thou have life everlasting? *This same Iesus Christ is very God, and life eternall*, 1 John 5. *And he that hath him hath life*, 1 John 5.12. Wouldst thou have comfort in distresse, and true delight in temporall blessings? then get *Christ Iesus*: for he is *life in death*; and without him, the good things of this life be no blessings unto us.

Matth.6. vers.20.

B *II. Point.* Having found what this treasure is, let us now see how every one must lay it up for himselfe: for so Christ here commandeth, *Lay up for your selves, &c.* That we may *lay up Christ crucified for our treasure*, we must be carefull to doe *five things*, intimated in the parable of him that bought the field wherein the hidden treasure was: 1 We must finde this treasure: 2 We must value it: 3 Obtaine and get it: 4 Assure it to our selves: 5 Use it as a treasure.

How to lay up Christ crucified for our treasure.

C *I. Dutie.* We must needs *finde this treasure* first of all, else we cannot value it, nor obtaine it, we cannot assure it to our selves, nor use it. And thus much is implyed in that parable, where it is called an *hidden treasure*; for we cannot have a thing that is hid before we finde it. Now the *finding of this treasure* stands in Gods revealing of it unto us, letting vs see that naturally we want it, and making us feele that we are poore without it, and therefore stand in great need of it, whereupon we begin to seeke it. Every revealing of this treasure is not the finding of it, for God enlightens the minde of man two wayes: first, generally, whereby a man in reading the Word is able to conceive the true sense and meaning of it. Secondly, more specially, when beside the generall sense, God makes a man feele the truth and power of the Word in his owne conscience: and in this speciall illumination stands the true finding. This indeed is a great blessing of God, but not common to all: for our naturall eyes cannot discerne it, and the more we are dazled with the sight of worldly treasures, pompes, and vanities, the blinder we are about this spirituall treasure: yea, this treasure is hid from many that are able to expound the Word of God truely; as Christ saith, *these things are hid* (oftentimes) *from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes*: for till the Lord give this speciall illumination whereby a man sees his owne miserie in himselfe, and his greatneed of Christs righteousnesse, Christ is a hidden treasure unto him. In regard whereof we must descend into our owne hearts, and there trie whether by the sense of our owne miserie in our selves, and our owne desire and hungring after Christ, God have revealed this treasure unto us: we may say, [b] *we see,*

How to finde the true treasure.

A twofold illumination.

Matth.11.25.

[b] John 9.41.

see, with the Jewes, and *yet be blinde*, unlesse we truely feele the want of Christ in our owne soules: oh therefore labour for this speciall illumination; for the doctrine of the Gospell will never be sweet and pleasant to us, till we finde this precious treasure hid therein.

How to value the true treasure.

II. Dutie. Having found this treasure, wee must *highly prize and value it*, even above all that we have or can get; nay, more worth than all the world besides. So did the man in the parable, Mat.13.44. *esteeme the treasure hid in the field above all his goods*: And [c] *Paul* so esteemed of Christ crucified, that *counted all things losse for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ, and judged them as dongue that he might win Christ*. This high esteeme of Christ is needfull, if ever we meane to lay him up for our treasure; and then have we made good progresse in this heavenly purchase, when wee truly value Christ in our hearts at so high a rate: and therefore we must endeavour our selves hereunto, and labour so to frame our whole conversation in speeches and in action, that they may testifie at how high a rate we value Christ. And because the word of God reveales Christ Jesus unto us, in which regard it is [d] *called a treasure*, therefore it also must be highly valued, even above all earthly things. Thus *David* did, Psal.119.72. *The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver*: vers.127. *I love thy commandements above gold, yea, above much fine gold*: hereof Wisdome saith, [e] *My fruit is better than gold, even than much fine gold, and my revenues better than fine silver*. It were happie for us if we did thus value the word of God. Many hold there is but one truth, and so that be knowne, it is no matter whence it is learned, whether out of Gods word, or the writings of men: but they are farre deceived, for the Scriptures of God onely are *that truth which is according to godlinesse*; and they alone discover unto us this heavenly treasure, and therefore they must have the prehemineuce in our hearts, and be esteemed farre above all the writings of men: which if wee would doe, wee should feele that power and comfort of the Word in our hearts, which naturally we lacke.

[c] Phil.3.8.

[d] 2 Cor.4.6.

How to value the word of God.

[e] Prov.8.19.

How to get the true treasure to our selves.

III. Dutie. Having found out, and rightly valued this true treasure, *we must seeke to get it for our selves, and make it our owne*: so did the man in the parable, (Matth.13.44.) when hee had found the treasure hid in the field; and so Christ here commandeth, *lay up treasures for your selves*. Now that we may get this treasure to our selves, we must conscionably use such meanes as God hath appointed for this purpose: to wit, I. heare the word of God preached, with all reverence, care, and diligence, labouring to mix it with faith in our hearts: II. receive the Sacraments with all reverence and due preparation: III. pray to God in faith earnestly and constantly for the pardon of our sinnes, and the fruition of this treasure. The reason hereof is plaine: for the word and Sacraments are as it were the Lords two hands, wherewith he reacheth out this heavenly treasure and all spirituall blessings unto us; and our faith is the hand of our soule, wherewith we receive them, now by our prayers we testifie this faith, and sanctifie unto our selves the two former meanes.

How to make this treasure sure to our selves.

IV. Dutie. Having gotten this treasure, *we must labour to make it sure unto our selves*. And to this purpose we must follow *Pauls* counsell and charge to rich men: 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19. *Charge the rich men in this world, that they be not high minded, neither trust in uncertaine riches, but in the living God: that they doe good, and be rich in good workes: --laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtaine eternall life*: where remarke how by *trusting in God*, and by *liberalitie and bountie*, we are exhorted *to lay a good foundation*. What (will some say) must we be saved by our Almes-deeds, and good works? *Ans.* Not so: for the [f] *ground* of our salvation is Gods election & love in Christ, which he himselfe hath laid up in heaven for us. But the foundation which we must lay up for our selves, is in our owne conscience, for our assurance in Gods foundation: and this we lay by our good workes of love, mercie, and justice; all which be fruits of faith: and being done in faith, and with singlenesse of heart to Gods glorie, they are sure testimonies of our portion in the true treasure Jesus Christ: for *hereby we know we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren*, 1 John 3.14.

[f] 2 Tim.1.9.

How to use Christ as our treasure.

1

V. Dutie. Having got this treasure sure to our selves, *we must use it as a treasure*. Hereunto three duties are required: I. Wee must have our conversation in heaven, for there Christ our treasure is: and where our treasure is, there will our hearts be: and if our hearts be on Christ in desire, in joy, and delight, it cannot be but our lives will bee holy and heavenly, though our bodies be here on earth: but let us beware that our affections be not set on things below, for then is not Christ our treasure at all. II. We must turne our earthly goods into heavenly treasures. This we doe by imploying them in workes of mercie, *for he that gives unto the poore, lends unto the Lord*, Prov.19.17. So that the mercifull man hath the Lord for his debtor: for the Lord sends the poore man as his messenger unto the rich, to borrow of him such things as the poore man lacketh: and the Lords returne of payment is in heavenly blessings: and therefore Christ himselfe as it were explaining this point, 2 bids, *sell that ye have, and give almes: make you bagges which wex not old, a treasure that cannot faile in heaven, where no theefe commeth, neither moath corrupteth*: This then is the Lords owne direction, for this happie exchange of earthly goods for heavenly treasures, than which, who can wish a better increase. III. Wee must rather part with all that wee have, than with Christ Jesus; friends, goods, Countrey, libertie, nay, our

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2 Luke 12.33.

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owne life, and dearest hearts blood must all goe for this treasures sake: so doth the good purchaser, *part with all he hath for to buy the field in which this treasure is*, Matth. 13.44. but if we will rather part with Christ, than with some, or with all of these, then we use not Christ as the true treasure. Thus we see how Christ becomes our treasure; let us therefore make conscience to practise these five duties so long as we live: for when Christ becomes our treasure, marke what will follow; we shall finde in our hearts such sweet content therein, that neither prosperitie shall lift us up too high, nor adversitie cast us downe too low; nothing shall daunt us while we have this treasure sure; no kinde of death, no not the day of Judgement.

How the highest heaven is free from vanitie.

Thus much of the commandement, now followeth the particular reason thereof: *where neither moth nor canker corrupteth, &c.* This reason is drawne from the unchangeable certainitie and safetie of this treasure: earthly treasures are subject to corruption, and to losse by stealth; but this heavenly treasure is free from all such things: for the highest heaven is not subject to corruption, nor to the violence of theeves and robbers: and therefore our treasure must bee there. *Quest.* Why should the highest heavens be free from that vanitie, whereto all creatures else are subject by the sinne of man? *Ans.* The heavens above, which we looke upon, and the earth below, with all creatures in them, belonged to man by the right of creation, but the highest heaven is the throne of God: Now when man fell, he was punished not onely in his owne person, but in all the creatures that belonged unto him, which by his sinne were made subject unto vanitie: But the highest heaven was free from that curse, because it did not belong to man by the right of creation, but is a supernaturall gift, whereto we have right and title onely by the grace of Adoption and Redemption in Christ Jesus: now sith man had no right thereto by creation, it was not meet that the sinne of man should make it subject to vanitie or corruption. If therefore the safetie of an enduring substance can allure our hearts to love and like, then let us set our selves for this heavenly treasure.

v. 21 *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

This verse containes a reason of the former commandements, common to them both; tending to persuade us to the obedience of them both. The reason standeth thus: *Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also: But your hearts should not be on earth, but in heaven: Therefore lay not up treasures upon earth, but in heaven.*

The exposition. By *treasure* (as we said before) must be understood things precious and excellent in our estimation laid up for time to come, wherein we repose our trust, and take a speciall joy and delight. By *heart* we must conceive, not onely *the affections* which are seated in the heart, as love, joy, care, desire, and delight; but thereore inward powers of the soule in *thought* and *imagination*; yea, and *the effects* hereof, in action, as labour, studie, and endevour: As if he should say; Your treasure and your heart are joyned together, looke where that thing is wherein you trust, and take chiefe delight, and thereon will your thoughts runne; your love, feare, desire, and care will draw unto it; and your chiefest paines, studie, and endevour will be after it.

The use. Doe heart and treasure goe together? Then here first we learne to search out and trie the state of our owne hearts: for though it be a bottomlesse gulfe, *and*[h] *deceitfull above all things, so as none can throughly know it*, yet if we apply this sentence aright, unto our selves, we shall be able to give true judgement of the state of our owne heart. *An earthly treasure, and an earthly heart; but heavenly treasure, and an heavenly heart*: these cannot be severed: and therefore looke whereon thou spendest thy thoughts, and setteest thy love, thy care and delight, and bestowest thy wit, industrie, and labour, and thereby judge of the disposition of thy heart. If the thing be earthly and worldly, then thy heart is earthly and carnall: thou maist plead that thou heaest the word, receivest the Sacraments, and prayest often; yet all this will not prove thee to have Christ Jesus for thy treasure: for thine heart being set upon the World, there undoubtedly thy treasure is, and that proves thy heart to be earthly and carnall. And on the contrarie, if thy principall thoughts, thy chiefe love, joy, and delight be on Christ crucified, thy speciall care and industrie be after his merits and righteousnesse, then is Christ thy treasure, and thine heart is heavenly.

h Jerem. 17.9. How to trie the state of our owne heart.

The knowledge of our title to heaven.

Secondly, hereby we may know whether we have any portion in heaven: for looke where our heart is, there our portion is: If our heart in thoughts, desire, and industrie, be set on earthly things, then is our portion upon earth: but if we minde heavenly things, if wee delight in them, and labour after them, then is our portion in heaven. It is not the exercise of religious actions now and then, but the setling of the heart either on earth or heaven, that shewes where our portion is.

How to esteeme of the world in regard of heaven.

Thirdly, this coupling of the heart and treasure together, teacheth us, not to regard this World, nor temporall life, in respect of heaven and life eternall; nay, in this regard we must despise the world and temporall life, so farre forth as it may be done without ingratitude to God, and without hatred of the worke of his hands, and of his temporall blessings: for as earthly creatures are the workmanship of God, so temporall life is his good blessing, given us as a time wherein wee are to prepare our selves for

for life eternall; and therefore simply we may not despise it, but onely in respect of life eternall. Now we must shew this high respect to heaven, and to life eternall, above that we have to this world and temporall life, by heavenly meditations, and by spirituall desires, joy, and delight: for if heaven be our treasure, then must our delight be drawne from worldly things, and set on heaven.

v. 22 *The light of the body is the eye: if thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be light:*

23 *But if thine eye be wicked, then all thy body shall be darke. Wherefore if the light that is in thee be darknesse, how great is that darknesse?*

These two verses have sundrie expositions, which we must discusse, before we can see the scope and coherence of them in this place. Of sundrie which I take to misse the right scope of Christ in this place, I will onely touch one, which is the most probable: and then set downe that which I take to be the best. By *single eye* some understand *a liberall minde*; and by *the wicked eye*, an *envious and covetous minde*: and so they make Christ here to speake of liberalitie and covetousnesse. Now it is true that the words will beare this sense, for *Salomon* puts the *good eye*, for the liberall and merciffull person: Prov. 22.9. *He that hath the good eye, he shall be blessed: for he giveth of his bread unto the poore:* and *the evill eye*, for the covetous person: Prov. 28.22. *A man of a wicked eye hasteth unto riches.* But though the words will beare this interpretation, yet it is not (as I take it) the proper meaning of Christ in this place: for here, the *light of the body*, the *single eye*, and the *light that is in us*, be all put for one and the same thing. Now *the light that is in us*, is the understanding and judgement of the minde. Againe, the *eye* is here called the light of the whole body: but the liberall minde cannot be the light of the whole body for all actions, but for workes of mercie and bountie onely.

The true meaning.

To come therefore to that which I take to be Christs true meaning: The words containe in them divers similitudes: In the first words, *The light of the body is the eye*, is a parable taken from a candle in an house; for as a burning candle set up in an house, lighteth the house and all that be in it; *So the light of this eye* (which is the understanding) lighteth the whole body, and giveth direction to the whole man, in all his actions. In the next words, *If thine eye be single, &c.* to the end of the 23. verse is a second similitude, which standeth thus: If a man have a good and cleare bodily eye, hee can guide himselfe in the right way, and keepe his feet from stumbling and from falling: but if his eye be dimme and darke, then he cannot walke without stumbling: and if he want an eye, or that his eye be starke blinde, then of himselfe he cannot walke without stumbling and wandering: so in like manner, if the understanding which is the eye of the minde, be found and cleare, able to judge of good and evill, then is the whole life well ordered: but if the judgement be corrupt, then is there much disorder in the life: and if it be cleane put out, then is there nothing but brutish confusion.

Thus stand the comparisons in these words: Now the meaning of them is this. The first words are plaine, *The light of the body is the eye*, that is, the eye gives light for the direction of the bodie; as a light in an house directs the housholders in their affaires. *If thine eye be single, &c.* By *eye* here is meant the minde, resembled by the bodily eye: and *the single eye* is the understanding minde, able to judge of good and evill, of things to be done, and not to be done. *Thy whole body shall be light*: by *body* is meant, the *life*, and *by light* is meant, *well ordered and directed*: for the minde is to the life for the directing of it, that which the eye is to the body for the ordering thereof. *But if thine eye be wicked, &c.* The *wicked eye* is the *corrupt minde*, having the understanding darkned, and judgement so depraved, that it cannot rightly discerne of good and evill, what is to be done, and what is to be left undone. *Then all thy body shall be darke*; that is, thy whole life in all thine actions shall be full of sinne and disorder. *Wherefore if the light that is in thee be darknesse*; that is, if the naturall light of reason and judgement left in man after the fall, be quite extinguished. *How great is that darknesse?* that is, wonderfull shall his corruption and disorder be; yea, so full of confusion, that there shall be no difference betweene his life, and the life of a brutt beast. And this I take to be Christs proper meaning.

Coherence.

Now the words thus explaned, depend upon the former as an answer to a secret objection, which the heart of man might frame unto it selfe, against these two commandements, to this effect: If there be such necessitie of laying up treasures in heaven, and of avoiding to lay up treasures in earth, then why doe not the most wise and learned men of our time doe so; they seeke more for earthly treasures than for heavenly? Herero Christ answers thus, as if he had said; marvell not at this, for they want the single eye, the understanding minde to discerne of things that differ, they cannot judge aright of the true treasure, and so not knowing the heavenly, they seeke the earthly treasure onely. Now that we may perceive the words of Christ thus to answer the former objection, we must know that Christ doth here presuppose this much; that everie mans eye is either single, corrupt, or blinde: and *the single eye* which is

a good

a good understanding, befalls not all men, no not all wise and learned men, but them onely to whom God in mercie gives it. But the *corrupt eye* befalls everie man naturally. And some by sinne put out the light of nature, and so become senseless in spiritualls things. And hence it is, that all men naturally wanting the single eye, and having the corrupt eye, yea, many having the blinde eye, doe not discerne of the true treasure: and so leave the heavenly, and give themselves wholly to the earthly.

Thus we see both the meaning and the coherence, leading us to the maine cause of covetousnesse, with the blinde eye of the minde not able to discerne of true spiritualls treasure. Now in the words these three points are to be handled: I. The single eye, with the fruits thereof: II. The wicked eye, with his fruits. III. The darke and blinde eye, with the fruits thereof.

The single eye.

I. Point. The *single eye* is the minde of man indued with some portion of true heavenly wisdome; and *the fruit of it* is to *give the body light*. To know this single eye the better we must search out what true wisdome is. This true heavenly wisdome is no common gift, which every professour may have, but a speciall gift of God in Christ, peculiar to them that doe truely beleeve in him. 1 Corinth.1.30. *Christ is made wisdome unto us of God*; not onely because hee is the matter of our wisdome, we being then onely truely wise, when we *know Christ and him crucified*; but also because hee is the root from whence all our wisdome springs: for being ingrafted into Christ by faith, we become, as it were, [a] *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones*, and so are not onely made just by the imputation of his obedience, but doe also receive inherent holinesse and wisdome from him; our wisdome and holinesse being derived from his, as the branch is from the stocke, and the fruit from the root. And this wisdome befalls not atall to the Devill and his angels, though they know much, not to all that are Christians in name; but onely to the members of his mystical bodie by faith.

What is true heavenly wisdome.

a Ephes.5.30.

The actions of true wisdome. I

This heavenly wisdome hath two actions: *First*, to discerne aright of things that differ, and to distinguish one thing from another spiritually: this *Paul* prayed for in the behalfe of the Philippians, Phil.1.9. *That their love might abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgement or* [b] *sense, that so they might discerne things that differ*: that is, good from evill, and heavenly from earthly; what to doe, and what to leave undone, which is a propertie of men of age in religion, who through long custome attaine hereunto, Hebr. 5.14. And hence it is that the childe of God can, I. discerne the voyce of Christ, the true shepherd, from the voyce of all false teachers. II. By this gift of discerning, he can put a difference betweene the water of Baptisme, and all other water; and betweene the Bread and Wine in the Lords Table, and common bread and wine. III. Hereby the Church, and everie true member of it is enabled to judge rightly of crosses, distinguishing fatherly chastisements, from Gods plagues and curses for sinne. IV. Hereby he can discerne the things of God, even his owne election, his vocation, adoption, and justification; these and such he can perceive in himselfe more or lesse. V. In a word, hereby he can discerne the true treasure, from worldly; hereby he knowes the excellencie of heavenly things, above earthly. These things the naturall man cannot, *but the spiritualls man discerneth all things*, 1 Cor.2.15. looke whatsoever befalls him, therein he can see the hand of God working for his good, therein he can discerne Gods wisdome, power, and providence: in all which we may perceive the most excellent use of this heavenly wisdome.

b 1 Cor.12.

The second action of true wisdome.

The second action of this heavenly wisdome, is to judge, determine, and give sentence of things, what is to be done, what is not to be done; what is good, and what is evill in practice and behaviour. And here this one thing must be remembred, that the principall point of this wisdome is to determine of true happinesse, whereto the whole life of man ought to be directed: which *happinesse is the love and favour of God in Christ*. Herein *David* shewes his heavenly wisdome, farre different from the wisdome of the World, Psal.4.6. *Many say, who will shew us any good?* there is the worldlings happinesse; *But Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*; there is true happinesse: so *Paul* comming among the wisest of the Gentiles, professeth, that *he esteemed to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified*: 1 Cor.2.2. *for whose excellent knowledge sake, he thought all things to be losse*, Philip. 3.8. And the same should be our wisdome; for though a man had all humane learning and policie, yet if he faile in this, rightly to determine of true happinesse, all his wisdome would prove foolishnesse; for [c] *the wisdome of this World is foolishnesse with God*: and therefore *if any man seeme to be wise in this World, let him be a foole, that he may be wise*; that is, a foole to the World in esteeming the knowledge of Christ crucified onely true wisdome; and the favour of God in him, true happinesse; that so he may be wise indeed in the sight of God. Another chiefe part of this heavenly wisdome, is a spirituall and godly providence, whereby we fore-cast by all meanes how to compasse and come by true happinesse: herein the power of heavenly wisdome is shewed. And without this, though otherwise a man discerne the right, yet his knowledge and wisdome is imperfect and unprofitable. And thus we see the actions of this heavenly wisdome, whereby we may describe it thus: *It is a gift of Gods spirit to them that are in Christ, whereby they are enabled to discerne of things that differ, and to judge and determine what is that true happinesse, whereto the life of man ought to tend; and withall to foresee and provide by what good and lawfull meanes it*

It is true wisdome to discerne of true happinesse.

c 1 Cor.3.18,19.

Spirituall providence.

True wisdome described.

may bee compassed. And hee whose minde is endued herewith in some measure, hath *the single eye*.

The fruit of the single eye.

Now the fruit of this single eye is, *to make the whole body light*; that is, to bring the whole life in good order, guiding it in the pathes of righteousnesse, and making it to abound in good workes. Prov.8.19,20. *My fruit* (saith wisdome) *is better than fine gold. -- I cause to walke in the way of righteousnesse, and in the mids of the pathes of judgement*. Prov.16.23. *The wise heart guideth the mouth wisely, and addeth doctrine unto his lips*.

We must labour to get heavenly wisdome.

The use. 1. Considering the minde endued with this wisdome is thus commended; wee must hereby learne, to labour for it in a speciall manner: beside this commendation of it by our Saviour Christ which should be a spurre to provoke us to this duties, the singular commoditie that redounds hereby to soule and body must move vs to affect it. Now that we may the better obtaine this heavenly wisdome, we must be carefull of these two things especially: First, to get *the feare of God into our hearts, which is the beginning of this heavenly wisdome*. Psal.111.10. Now this feare of God is a reverend awe of the heart towards God, whereby a man is fearefull to offend, and carefull to please God in all things. And this we shall get, if we receive the word of God with reverence, and apply it to our owne soules when we heare it: trembling thereat when it toucheth our consciences, and humbly submitting our selves unto it without raging or repining; saying, as *Hezekiah* did to the Prophets reproofe, [d] *The word of the Lord is good*. Secondly, we must wholly close up our eyes, (the eyes of our minde I meane) and suffer our selves in all things to be over-ruled and ordered by the written Word of God. This was [e] *Davids* practice: he gave himselfe to *continuall meditation in the Word of God*: he *made it a* [f] *lanterne to his feet, and a light unto his paths*. And hereby he became [g] *wiser than his enemies, and got more understanding than all his teachers*. Wouldest thou then be truely wise? become a foole to the world, leane not to thine owne wisdome; but make Gods Word thy whole direction.

How it is gotten. 1

How it is gotten. 2

d Isa.39.8.

e Psal.119.67.

f Vers.105.

g Vers.98.

Secondly, hereby wee are taught to *walke wisely in our whole conversation*, that so it may appeare we have this single eye: hereto [h] *Paul* oft exhorteth us. And thus we walke when we practise every action of our life in wisdome, according to these foure rules, which are to be observed in every good action: I. The thing we doe must be just. II. The meanes of effecting it must also be just. III. We must keepe our selves therein, within the compasse and limits of our calling. IV. Wee must doe the thing with an honest, upright, and single heart. And that we may worke wisely according to these foure rules, we must ever have the Word of God, to tell us what is just; what meanes be just; what be the precincts of our calling; and when wee worke with an upright and single heart: so doing, our workes shall be in wisdome, and we shall have the approbation and praise of God.

h Colos.4.5. Ephes.5.15. How to walke wisely.

How to season naturall wisdome.

Thirdly, seeing this single eye of spirituall wisdome, makes our life to shine with righteousnesse, we must learne to season our naturall wit, with this spirituall wisdome. Naturall wisdome is a commendable gift of God, but without this spirituall wisdome it is foolishnesse in the things of God, yea, very corrupt in naturall actions; and therefore wee must joyne therewith this heavenly wisdome, which may season it, and make it holy; and so shall the use of it tend to Gods glory. It is the miserie of this age, that men of excellent parts for naturall wisdome, have no regard to season the same with spirituall wisdome: hereby come many aberrations in matters of great importance, for it is Justice with God to curse their proceedings, that despising the heavenly, leane altogether to their owne wisdome.

The practice of spirituall providence.

Fourthly, seeing spirituall providence in forecasting how to compasse true happinesse, is a speciall part of true heavenly wisdome; wee must become carefull practitioners hereof in our lives, that so we may attaine to true happinesse. When the *rich* [i] *mans ground brought forth much fruit, how provident was he to lay up store for the time to come*: yet God calls him but *a foole*, because he had no regard or forecast to the state of his soule. And the *five virgins* are therefore called [k] *foolish, because they contented themselves with blazing lamps, and had no forecast for oyle in their vessels*: and so many at this day content themselves with an outward profession, and doe not provide for the graces of salvation. But though a man had all the wisdome of the world, and by his wit could compasse upon earth what his heart could wish, yet if he faile in providing for true happinesse, all his wisdome is but madnesse: see this in [l] *Achitophel, whose counsell* for worldly things *was like the oracle of God*, yet wanting this spirituall wisdome to forecast for true happinesse to his soule, his end was both shamefull and fearefull: for in a discontent, [m] *he went and hanged himselfe*. Let us therefore practise this wise forecast for true happinesse, and never be well till we get assurance hereof; then doe we shew ourselves truely wise. If we faile in this we faile in all; and therefore like the wise Virgins, let us get oyle in our vessels, the saving graces of Gods spirit in our hearts, that when our bridegroome Jesus Christ shall come, we may enter with him into glory. And thus much of the single eye, with the fruits thereof.

i Luke 12.17,18.

k Matth.25.5.

l 2 Sam.16.23.

m 2 Sam.17.23.

The wicked eye with the fruits thereof.

The second point to be handled is *the wicked eye*, with *the fruits thereof*; in these words, *But if thine eye be wicked, thy whole body shall be darke*. The *wicked eye* is the minde of man, having some light of understanding in it by nature, yet marvellously blinded and darkned by the corruption of sinne through *Adams* fall.

And for our better instruction herein, we must know, that the minde of man by *Adams* fall receives a twofold blemish: first, it hath lost the gift of discerning and judging in spiritual things, mistaking evill for good, earthly for heavenly, things to be refused, for things to be chosen. This is plaine by our blindnesse and ignorance in the true knowledge of God, and of our selves. First, touching God, howsoever the minde of man by nature know there is a God, yet naturally man will not acknowledge the *presence of God*: for if he did, he would not without remorse or feare commit these sinnes in Gods sight, which he is afraid and ashamed to doe in the sight of many men. Againe, the minde by nature will not acknowledge *Gods particular providence*, for in the time of want or distresse when meanes faile, his heart is dead within him: and the promise of helpe from man doth more cheere him, than his hope in God; which shewes plainely that hee trusteth more in the creature, than in his Creatour. Thirdly, the minde of man by nature doth not acknowledge *Gods justice*, for naturally man thinkes, that though he sinne, yet he shall scape punishment, as Deut. 26. 16. Fourthly, though man know God must be worshipped, yet naturally the minde discerneth not of *Gods right worship*; herein *the foolish heart is full of darkenesse, and turneth God into an* Idoll, Rom.1.21,2 . And in a word, *the naturall man perceiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*, 1 Corinth. 2.14. which shewes plainely that herein hee hath a wicked eye.

The blindnesse of man in the things of God.

Secondly, *for our selves*, the minde herein wants the gift of discerning: for, I. No man naturally knowes the *blindnesse of his owne minde*, *they thinke themselves to be wise*, when in the things of God they be starke fooles. II. Man cannot discerne aright of his *owne sinnes*, nor see the vilenesse of them naturally, though his conscience oft accuse him; for if he did, he would not sinne as he doth: III. Man naturally doth judge amisse of his owne *frailtie and mortalitie*, for there is no man so aged, but he thinkes he may live longer. This *Moses* saw when he *prayed God to teach them so to number their dayes, that they might apply their hearts unto wisdome*. IV. Naturall men cannot discerne aright of the *scope* and *end of their lives*: for whereas we ought to aime at the glory of God, and the good of our brethren, to serve God in mens good: by nature we little thinke on this, but wholly seeke our owne good, and our owne praise. V. We cannot naturally discerne of *our owne true happinesse*; for doe we not measure it by outward things, esteeming the rich and honourable happy, and the poore man miserable? By all which it is more than evident, that the minde hath lost the gift of right discerning.

The second blemish of corruption in the minde is, in respect of it *subjection* unto those things which it should rule and direct: for naturally it is subject to these three unmeet guides: I. to the corrupt will and affections: II. to the wicked temptations of the devill cast into it, yea, and that so farre, that such as the temptation is, such is the minde that is tempted: III. to the World, and the ill examples therein: for naturally men sway with the times, and thinke the common course the safest. And in this respect also is it here called a wicked eye.

The fruit of a wicked eye.

Now the *fruit* of it is, *to make the whole body darke*; that is, the whole life of man full of disorder and unrighteousnesse. And how should it be otherwise, when that which should discerne betweene good and evill, and direct accordingly, is disabled thereunto.

The use. 1. Seeing by nature we have this evill eye (for that Christ taketh for granted) we must labour diligently to discerne it in our selves, and to finde that naturally we cannot judge aright of God and of our selves. This is the first step to true knowledge, to discerne of our owne naturall blindnesse: and till we perceive it in our selves in some measure, we know nothing as we ought to know. Also when we see it, we must bewaile our miserie in this behalfe, that we have a minde so corrupt, that it causeth disorder in our whole life: yea, we must tremble and feare at this wicked eye. Bodily darkenesse causeth feare, but farre more dangerous is this spirituall darkenesse: for hereby the soule is kept from the sight of God under the power of Satan. We therefore discerning in our selves this wicked eye, must follow the counsell of our Saviour Christ, Revel.3.18. *Buy of me eye-salve, that thou mayest see*: that is, we must get of him the enlightning of his Spirit, in the holy ministerie of his Word; for this is that *anointing which teacheth us all things*, 1 John 2.27. which when we doe truely receive, then doth our wicked eye become single.

Secondly, hereby we see that the course of the world, in regard of the state of their mindes, is justly to be reproved; for every where both young and old content themselves with this wicked eye, if they can say, there is a God, and this God is to be worshipped, to be loved, and feared; and that we must love our neighbour as our selves, and live well, they seeke no further: and yet if a man were brought up in the wildernesse, he might see all this by the light of nature; the wicked eye seeth thus much: but we must not content our selves herewith, for if there be no more, the life is full of darkenesse still; and the soule may goe to utter darkenesse with all this. Wetherefore must remember to get the single eye, else wee are no Schollers in the Schoole of Christ. Indeed some plead, that Preachers can say no more in effect but this, *Love God above all, and thy neighbour as thy selfe*: but these men know not what they say, blessing themselves in their ignorance: they must know that grace must be put to nature, and sanctifie it; and spirituall knowledge joyned with naturall, or else we remaine with the wicked

Men content themselves with a wicked eye.

wicked eye. If we have no more but a generall confused knowledge in morall points, that serves not to save us, but to make us without excuse at the last day. Againe, another common fault worthie reproofe is this, that men content themselves with naturall reformation; they will grant that God is to be worshipped, and loved, that we must live well, deale justly, and love our neighbours: but the blinde eye seeth thus much. The meere civill man will goe thus farre, and yet his life is nothing but darkenesse: all this reformation is but naturall. We therefore must labour for renewed hearts, by the Spirit of God, and reformed lives according to the Gospel; for howsoever a civill conversation may commend us unto men, yet it will not save us in the day of the Lord.

Be not selfe wise in the matters of salvation.

Thirdly, is this evill eye in every one by nature? then beware we be not wise in our selves, and from your selves, in matters of salvation; herein the Word of God must be our wisdome; Deut.12.8.--11.-- *Ye shall not doe every man that which seemeth good in his owne eyes — but that which I command you*. Farre be it therefore from us to appoint to our selves, how we will worship God, or how we will be saved: and yet such is our blinde presumption, that we will be our owne masters in these things. The Turke hath his religion, the Jew his, and the Papist his, all swarving from the truth of God: and yet every one of these looke to be saved in their religion: each one of these have a different manner of worshipping God, and all swarving from the true worship: and yet they all perswade themselves that God is well pleased with their service. And thus it goes with naturall men among us, though otherwise sufficiently wise for worldly things; they resolve upon their owne course for the salvation of their soules, let the preacher say what he will: some thinke, if they repent at their end, and then commend their soules to God, it is sufficient; others looke to be saved by their wel-doing, and others by their faith (as they call it:) but in truth, by their owne good meaning, and intent to live well; for what faith have they that know not Gods word and promises? Thus by their owne wisdome will men be saved, and hereby the Devill destroies many a soule: but let God be wise, and every man a foole, and let us submit our selves in the things of God, wholly to be ruled and guided by his written Word, left Jewishly and Popishly, we going about to stablish our owne conceits in the matters of salvation, doe plunge our soules into the pit of destruction.

The eye of faith must be single.

Fourthly, is the eye of the minde naturally corrupt? then must we labour for a better eye; that is, *the eye of faith*, by which we relie on Gods mercie for our salvation, and on his providence for all needfull things in life and death. This eye makes supply to that which is wanting to naturall knowledge; hereby wee discerne rightly of God, and of our selves; this enables us to see afarre off: yea, hereby we see things invisible. *for it is the evidence of things which are not seene*. Hebr.11.1. hereby *Abraham saw the day of Christ, and was glad*, John 8.58. and all the *Patriarkes saw the promise of God afarre off*, Hebr.11.13. This will inable us to walke in their steps towards the heavenly Citie; and therefore let us get this faith, and so becomming children of the promise, wee may bee counted for the seed. And thus much for the wicked eye.

3. The blinde eye.

The third kinde of eye is *the blinde eye*, which is set out with the fruits thereof, in these words; *Wherefore, if the light that is in thee be darkenesse, how great is that darkenesse?* For the better discerning of the state of man with this blinde eye, we must see what is meant by *light*, and also by *darkenesse*. By *light* is meant that knowledge of God, of justice, and of good and evill, which is in the minde by nature: now though this cannot be quite put out, (for the most wicked wretch, and the verieſt Atheist that lives, hath some conscience remaining, which is a worke of this light) yet it may be so buried and covered, that no light shall appeare, nor any use be made of it; and then it is laid to be *darkenesse*: which is the state of these that are given up to a reprobate sense, as when a man denies there is a God, or that the Scriptures be the Word of God, or such like; in these men naturall light is become darkenesse. And the cause of this change in them, is their corrupt will and rebellious affections, which overruling naturall knowledge and conscience, cause men to give themselves to actuall sinnes, whereby at length they come to commit sinne greedily and without remorse; yea, even against conscience, and the light of nature, and so bury them both in such sort, that they have no more use of them, than if they were quite put out.

The fruit of the blinde eye.

Now where the light of nature is thus put out, the fruit of it is most palpable darkenesse: *How great is that darkenesse?* that is, there is nothing in that mans life, but brutish confusion in hellish actions, of pride, covetousnesse, envie, blasphemie, and unnaturall uncleanneſse; as Rom.1.27,29, &c.

A motive to consider our naturall vilenesse.

The use. Considering the light of nature may be thus put out, we must hereby be admonished; First, to enter into a serious consideration of our owne vilenesse; for naturally we have in us (even the best of us all) such rebellious lust, and damnable desires, as unlesse they be restrained, or renewed by grace, will darken, and as good as put out the light of nature. This should make us vile in our owne eyes, that nourish such corruptions, and esteeme so of sinne, which will put out that light which yet *Adams* fall left in us.

To mortifie corrupt desires.

Secondly, hereby we are admonished to have speciall care to mortifie our corrupt desires, and our unruly affections, that else will extinguish in us the light of nature. Before the fall, the minde ruled and directed the will and affections; but now these inferiour powers rule, or rather

other over-rule the minde, and utterly pervert the regiment thereof; they cast a mist, and a vaile over the eye of the minde that is can see nothing in the wayes of righteousnesse: and therefore as wee tender the salvation of our soules, wee must renounce our owne naturall wills and corrupt desires, and strive to bring them into subjection unto the Word of God. Many men thinke much to be crossed of their naturall desires and delights, but it is happie for the soule, when God in his providence doth breake men of their wills: for the will unsubdued carries the whole man headlong into all disorder. This must bee considered of them which have knowledge and learning, for unlesse the will and affections bee ruled by the Word, all knowledge is made fruitlesse: *Out of the heart* (saith *Salomon*) *come the issues of life*, if it be kept with watch and ward, and ordered by Gods Word; otherwise hence come the issues of death, when the reines of the affections are let loose after the corrupt desires of nature: and therefore as we respect woe or joy, so must we have regard to our will and desires.

Thirdly, if the light of nature may be turned into darknesse, then may the illumination of the Gospel be put out and turned into darknesse; for the knowledge of the Gospel is not naturall, and therefore not so deeply imprinted in the understanding, upon the bare knowledge of it. Experience sheweth this to be true, in all those temporizers which begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh: and the Author to the Hebrewes shewes five degrees of Apostasie, by which the illumination of the Gospel is turned into darknesse, Hebr. 3.12. saying, *Take heed lest there be in any of you an evill heart of unbeleefe, &c.* where the first degree is consenting unto sinne, being deceived with the temptation of it. The second is hardnesse of heart, upon many practices of sinne. Thirdly, the heart being hardened, becomes unbeleeving, and calls the truth of the Gospel into question. Fourthly, by unbeleefe it becomes evill, having a base conceit of the Gospel. Fifthly, this evill heart brings a man to Apostasie, and falling from God, which is the extinguishing of the light of the Gospel. We therefore to prevent this fearefull estate, must embrace the Gospel, and practise the counsell there set downe; even by looking carefully everie one to his owne heart and life, and by mutuall admonition and exhortation one of another, vers. 13. that for the first step of this Apostasie, which is *the deceitfulnesse of sinne*, take not place in us.

Fourthly, seeing the light of nature may be put out, whether may not true faith, and other saving graces be quite lost? *Answ.* There is no grace of God, but considered in it selfe, it may be lost; for it is a creature, and so is changeable, for nothing is unchangeable in it selfe, but the Creator: but in regard of the promise of God, touching the preservation of saving grace unto the end, in such as bee in Christ, hence it comes that faith, hope, and charitie cannot be lost; for *the gifts and calling of God, are without repentance in Christ*. God indeed gave to *Adam* true and perfect grace, whereby he might have stood if he would; but because he decreed to permit the fall, to make a way for his mercie in Christ, therefore he left man in the hand of his owne counsell, and so he fell from his created integritie: but now in Christ God workes both the will and the deed, so as hee which doth truely beleeve, [b] *is as Mount Zion; which cannot bee removed, but standeth fast for ever*: for he is built upon *the* [c] *rocke Christ Iesus*, and so can never fall: *the gates of hell shall not prevaile against him*: God gives a second grace unto the first, and by vertue hereof it becomes unchangeable, though in it selfe considered, it might be lost. Against, I answer thus; that as the light of nature is not quite put out, but onely buried, in such sort as it is without use, and seemes extinguished; so the grace of faith, by the practice of sinne, may be hid and covered, so as it shall not appeare for a time: but yet it cannot be quite put out, where it is once truely wrought. And thus much of the blinde eye, with the fruit thereof.

b Psal.125.1.

c Matth.16.16.

Now to end this place, we must remember that the scope of Christ in these two verses, is to shew that the evill and blinde eye of man by nature, whereby he is disabled to discerne rightly of things that differ, is the cause why in seeking after treasure, hee leaveth the heavenly, and seeketh earthly treasure onely. And hereby we must be admonished to labour for this gift of discerning, by the illumination of the Spirit in the Word, as we shewed before, that *so the eye being single, the whole body may be light*: that is, so ordered, that with peace and comfort we may walke on in the way of life: whereas otherwise we walke in darknesse, and feare no danger till we fall into it irrecoverably.

v. 24 *No man can serve two masters --: for either hee shall hate the one, and love the other; or else he shall leane to the one, and despise the other. Yee cannot serve God and Mammon.*

Here Christ meeteth with a second objection, which the carnall heart of man might frame against the former commandements, v. 19. and 20. for whereas Christ had forbidden the treasuring up of worldly riches, and commanded the seeking of heavenly treasure; some man might flatter himselfe with this perswasion, *he might seeke both, and lay up both treasures for himselfe in earth, and in heaven also*. To this Christ answers, *No: that is impossible*; and he

he proves it thus: *No man can serve two Masters: But to seeke heavenly and earthly treasures, is to serve two masters: to wit, God and Mammon: and therefore no man can seeke them both*. The first part of this reason is fully set downe, and proved in the text, by the effect of such service in contrary affections and behavior: *for either hee shall hate the one, and love the other, &c.* The assumption and conclusion are necessarily implyed in the last words, *Yee cannot serve God and Mammon*: wherein Christ applies the former argument.

The Exposition. No man can serve two Masters. This may well be doubted of; for experience shewes, that by their mutuall consent, one Factor may serve divers Merchants. Hereto some answer thus, that it is implied, the masters must be of diverse and contrary qualities; as when one saith, *come and doe this*; the other saith, *doe it not*: and then no man can serve them both: and thus the words containe an holy truth. But yet because no clause is expressed, implying contrariety in the masters, therefore I take it, the words must bee taken as a *common proverb* among the Jewes, which Christ layes downe for the ground of his reason. Now in a Proverb it is not requisite it should be alwayes true, but for the most part, and ordinarily: as Luk.4.24. *No Prophet is accepted in his owne countrey*: that is, ordinarily. *For either he shall hate the one*] that is, the one Master commanding him; either disliking that he should be his Master, or displeased with his commandements: *And love the other*; that is, the other Master in whom hee taketh delight, and is well pleased with his commandements. *Or else he shall leane to the one, and despise the other*. These words are an explication of the former, shewing how it may appeare, that a servant hates one master and loves another: namely, *his leaning to the one*, declares his love unto him: that is, his applying of himselfe to respect his masters pleasure, and to doe his commandement. And *his despising the other*, declares his hatred, when hee hath no regard to his commandements. *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*. By *Mammon* hee meaneth riches, lucre, and gaine: Now he saith not, Ye cannot serve God and have riches; for *Abraham, Iacob* and *Iob*, were very rich, and yet served God sincerely: but *ye cannot serve God, and serve riches*: that is, give your selves to seeke riches, and set your hearts upon them, and serve God also.

Instructions.

I What it is to serve God.

In the words thus explaned, we may observe sundry instructions: First, here Christ sheweth *what it is to serve God*: a point much spoken of, but little knowne, and lesse practised. *To serve God* therefore is to *love God, and to cleave unto him*. Every one will say, he loveth God, and ever hath done; but beware herein of spirituall guile, for true love consists not in word and tongue, but in deed, and in truth: and God must be loved, not onely as he is a bountifull father, but as he is a Lord and Master, and doth command us service. The written Word shewes his will and pleasure, concerning us, what hee requireth at our hands; and if we serve him in deed, wee must love him in his power of commanding, though he should bestow no reward upon us. This *David* sheweth notably, Psalm. 119.25. *I am thy servant, grant mee therefore understanding that I may know thy testimonies*. Againe, if we serve God, wee must *cleave unto him*, and thereby testifie our love: now what is meant by *cleaving unto*, is notably expressed in the parable of the prodigall sonne, Luk.15.15. where it is said of him, that having spent his portion, *hee clave to a citizen of that country*; that is, he resigned and gave himselfe to his service: So *to cleave unto God* is to resigne a mans selfe unto Gods service, in obedience to all his commandements, and embracing all his promises: not suffering himselfe to be drawne from any part of Gods word, by unbeleefe or disobedience, though all the world should set against us. This *David* also professed of himselfe, saying, [a] *I have cleaved to thy testimonies, O Lord: and* [b] *I shall not be confounded when I have respect to all thy commandements*. On the contrary, when a man withdrawes himselfe from God, by disobedience to his commandements, and by unbeleefe, then he doth hate and despise him. Indeed the vilest wretch that lives, is ashamed with open mouth to professe hatred and despite of God, but yet the bad practice in life, bewrayeth the bad affection of the heart: Prov. 14.2. *He that is lewd or perverse in his wayes, despiseth God*; and they that live in the *breach of his commandements hate* [c] *him*, let them professe in word what they will.

a Psal.119.31.

b Psal.119.6.

c Exod.20.5.

Now the consideration hereof, serveth, First, to discover unto us the grosse blindnesse and superstitious ignorance of the world; who thinke that if a man rehearse the Lords prayer, the Creed, and the ten Commandements, he serves God well, let his life be what it will: but here Christ teacheth us a further thing; if we will be Gods servants, we must cleave unto him both in the affections of our heart, and in the actions of obedience in our life. Thus did *Abraham*, when God said unto him, *Thou shalt not kill*, he kept himselfe from murther; but when he said, [d] *Abraham, kill thy sonne*, he addressed himselfe to doe it, though hee were the sonne of the promise, and the onely sonne of his old age. Secondly, this sheweth how *Atheisme* abounds in all places at this day: *for to hate and despise God is flat Atheisme*: now they that withdraw their hearts from God, and set themselves to seeke the things of this world, neglecting obedience to Gods holy commandements, are here accounted of Christ, *despisers and haters of God*; and the number of such is great in every place. I know such men doe some to be called *Atheists*, but how they be esteemed in the world, it skilleth not, till they reforme this wicked practice, they are no better in the sight of Christ.

Vse. 1 The ignorance of the world.

d Gen.22.2.

2 Atheisme abounds.

Matth.6. vers.24.

Secondly, whereas *God* and *Mammon* are here opposed as two masters; hence we learne that *Mammon*, that is, *riches*, is a *great lord and master in the world*; this Christ here takes for granted, and therefore doth forewarne his Disciples of it. But how (will some say) can riches be a God? *Ans.* Not in themselves, for so they are the good creatures of God; but to the corrupt heart of man, which makes an idoll of them to it selfe, by setting his love and delight upon them, as on true happinesse, and confiding in them more than in the true God: and for this cause is *covetousnesse* called *idolatry*. Col.3.5. and the *covetous person* an *Idolater*, Ephes. 5.5. for looke whereon man sets his heart, that is his Lord and his God, though it be the devill himselfe. Now that men doe thus set up riches in their hearts, as an Idoll, and so become servants and slaves to that which God ordained to serve them, I shew plainly thus: For first, they neglect the worship and service of God for lucre and gaine, and spend more time with greater delight for earthly riches, than they doe for the true treasures of Gods heavenly graces. Secondly, let a man have worldly wealth at will, and he is full of joy and delight, his riches give him true contentment; but if he lose his goods, then vexation and sorrow doth more oppresse him, than all the promises of God in the Bible can comfort him. Thirdly, by transgressing Gods commandements, a man loseth heaven; but who is so grieved for his transgressions, whereby hee incurres this losse, as hee is for a small dammage in some part of his riches? Fourthly, I appeale to mens consciences, whether they be not farre more sharpe and eager set upon the meanes of gaine, than on prayer and other parts of Gods worship, which are the meanes of grace; all which doe argue plainly, that they serve Mammon, and honour riches for their God. So that howsoever by Gods blessing outward Idolatry may bee banished out of our Church, yet we have many Idolatours in our Land; for every covetous worldling sets up the Idoll of wealth and riches in his heart for his lord. And that these *Mammonists* abound every where, appeares by the common practices of oppression, extortion, and cruelty, in hard dealing towards the poore, by greedy Land-lords and Usurers; as also by the practices of the rich in the time of dearth, for by their hoording up of store, ingrossing of commodities, and enhancing of the price, to the augmenting of their private wealth, they mightily increase Gods wrath upon the poore. Indeed God hath his servants which have him onely for their God; but the number of them is small, in respect of those that set their hearts upon the world, and make Mammon their god.

Here then first behold, the slavish baseness of a covetous heart: for man was made to be the Lord of Mammon and wealth, and yet through covetousnesse he subjecteth himselfe to

A become a slave and vassall thereunto. Secondly, hereby let us learne to become faithfull disposers of worldly riches; and (as Christ saith) to *make us friends with this Mammon of iniquity*, by good disposing of it to Gods glory in works of mercy; and so shall we retaine our right of creation, whereby God made the creatures to serve us.

2

a Luk. 16.9.

Thirdly, Christ opposing *God* and *Mammon*, and saying, *no man can serve them both*, imports plainly, that he that *seekes to be rich, setting his heart thereon, forsakes God*: I say not that every rich man forsaketh God, for when God giveth abundance to a mans moderate labour and industry in his lawfull calling, hee may lawfully possesse it, using it to Gods glory: but *to seeke to be rich, is a denying of God*, because so the

B heart is servant to Mammon, and not to the Lord. This may appeare by their whole behaviour about wealth, whether we consider their getting, or their keeping, or imploying of it; in all which they sinne against God. First, in *getting*: for God giveth riches to whom he will, and hath not tied himselfe by promise to make any man rich; and therefore hee that resolves with himselfe that he will be rich, cannot make conscience of lying, fraud, injustice, Sabbath-breaking, and such like, when the committing of these things makes for his advantage. Secondly, they sinne in *keeping*: for he that resolves to be rich, will rather forsake the truth, than his wealth, in time of triall: and for the saving or

C recovery of his wealth, he will not sticke to seeke to blessers, wizards, conjurers, &c. Thirdly, for *disposing or imploying*; he that resolves to be rich, sinnes therein: for he cannot be drawne to workes of mercy, at least with any cheerfulnesse: and hence it comes that sometimes the poore doe starve before the rich mans doore.

3

Vse 1.

The consideration hereof serves, first, to correct our judgement concerning covetous and worldly minded persons; our censure of them is too mild and gentle, wee judge them honest men, only some what hard and neere themselves: but marke Christs sentence upon them, *Worldly persons forsake God, and chuse Mammon for their Lord and master*: which is a practice of Atheisme, and therefore not to be so lightly passed over as men think. Secondly, hereby we see

D it is a dangerous and unlawfull course, for men to make lawes with themselves, how rich they will be; as to have so many hundred, or thousand pounds in stocke, and so much lands, and rents, &c. for what followes upon this resolution? why surely they must needs give themselves to the compassing of their purpose, and so they fall into manifold snares of Satan, by practices of injustice, lying, fraud, &c. Thirdly, hereby we must be admonished to content our selves with that portion of goods, more or lesse, which God sendeth; knowing that a little is sufficient with Gods blessing upon it: *Away with covetousnesse* (as the Apostle [c] saith) *and be content with that ye have: for he hath said, I will*

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3

c Heb.13.5.

Matthew. vers.24.25.

will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

4

Men heart is all times divided from God.

Fourthly, whereas Christ saith, *Yee cannot serve God and Mammon*, wee learne, that the heart of man must not bee divided betweene God and the world; the one hatte to God, and the other to the world: no, God will have all, or none, herein he will not partakes with the creature: Prov.23.26. *My sonne, give me thy heart.*

Vse 1.

The consideration whereof serveth, first, to discover the hypocrisie and spirituall guile of many, who thinke they may live in some one sinne or other, and yet be Gods servants still: this is the conceit of drunkards, adulterers, covetous persons, and such like; for even while they live in these sinnes, they will come to Gods worship, to the Word and Prayer often, and to

B the Sacraments, at least once a yeare: which they would not doe, but that they thinke God hath respect unto them herein, like to the wicked Jewes, Jer.7.9,10. But they deceive themselves, for *no man can serve two masters*: while a man lives in any sinne the servant of the devill, hee can never be accepted of God for his servant. Secondly, this shewes that the servant of God is so farre forth delivered from sinne by regeneration, that no sinne reigneth in him: for

2

No sinne reigneth in Gods children.

to hee should serve two masters, for every reigning sinne is a Lord and master: Rom.6.16. *Know ye not, that to whomsoever you give your selves as servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether it be of sinne unto death, &c.* and he *that committeth sinne, is the servant of sinne.* Joh.8.34. This therfore is a sure ground, that no regenerate person lives in any sinne.

5

Thirdly, hereby every one is taught to consecrate both his soule and body to the Lord, endeavouring to serve him with all the powers and parts thereof; for God is our onely Lord and master, and therefore let all that is within us bow the knee to him: Rom.6.21. *The servant of God is one freed from sinne, who hath his fruit in holines, and the end everlasting life.* The *Queen of Sheba* pronounced *Salomons servants happy*, that stood before *Salomon* to heare his wisdome; how much more then are they happy,

1 King.10.8.

who in soule and body are Gods servants, who for bounty and wisdome infinitely surpasseth *Salomon*? He, if one will say, I would gladly serve God alone, and I desire I might doe it with all my heart; but the corruption of my nature is such, that it makes me to rebell against the commandements of God, and I cannot doe the good I would, but the evill I would not, that doe I so as I feare I serve two masters, *ans.* This is the state of Gods children in this life; but herewith they must stay themselves: when they faile in obedience, they must consider whether they doe so freely and willingly, or against their wils: If thy heart can truly say, thou doest unwillingly commit sinne, thou wouldest not doe it, and art truly grieved and displeased with thy selfe for it; then hee of good courage, thou doest not serve two ma-

A sters, for this sin [illegible] Now though there be in thee two [illegible] and the Spirit, the one hailing thee one way, and the other another; yet while thou strivest against the flesh, desiring and endeavouring to be wholly subject to the Spirit, though thou dis often in action, yet in Christ be thy sinnes pardoned, and God accepts in thee the will for the deed. Endeavour therefore to acquaint thy selfe more and more with the will of thy heavenly master, and seeke to please him in all things, and labour to mortifie the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit, and so shalt thou know God to be thy onely master, and in due time perceive thy freedome from the bondage of the flesh.

A comfort to them that are troubled with corruption.

v. 25 *Therefore I say unto you, bee not carefull for your life, what yee shall eat, or what yee shall drinke: nor yet for your body, what yee shall put on. Is not the life more worth than meat, and the body than raiment?*

Our Saviour Christ having forbidden the practices of covetousnesse, and prevented such objections as the corrupt heart of man might frame to excuse it selfe therein, doth here strike at the very root of covetousnesse, and seekes to remove the cause thereof; to wit, *distrustfull and inordinate care* for the things of this life, though they bee things necessary, as meat, drinke, and clothing; and in this argument he proceeds to the end of this chapter. Now this verse depends upon the former, as a conclusion inferred upon all that hee had told before concerning covetousnesse from the 19. vers. to this effect: Seeing they that seeke earthly treasures, neglecting the heavenly, doe want the single eye of spirituall wisdome, to discerne of the true treasure, and also are themselves servants unto Mammon; therefore I say unto you my Disciples, bee not carefull (no not for things needfull) immoderately, and in a distrustfull manner. And here againe he meets with another pretence of a covetous mande, wherewith it

B pleads for the service of Mammon; to wit, that the things they seeke for, are things necessarie, without which they cannot live. Hereto Christ answers, *You, but I say, you must not seeke, no not for things needfull, for your life, immoderately, and distrustfully.*

Coherence.

The exposition. I say unto you that is, I, that am your master, upon whom you depend for all heavenly instruction, and direction in all things needfull both for your soules and bodies, *I say unto you*: by this hee would prepare them to attention and reverent observation of

his commandement following, as being a matter of great importance, whereon depends the life of all obedience, in relying on Gods providence: in regard whereof, we also must with all good conscience make the same. *Bee not carefull for your life, &c.* Lest we should mistake Christs meaning, wee must know that there be two kinds of care; a godly moderate care, and a distrustfull carking care. The *moderate honest care* is injoyned us by Gods commandement; Prov. 6. 6. *Wisdome* sends the *sluggard* to learne diligence and providence for things needfull, of the little *Ant* or *pismire*: and *Paul* saith, *Fathers must lay up for their children*, 2 Cor.12. 14. *And he that provideth not for his owne, especially for them of his family, is worse than an Infidell*, 1 Tim.5.8. So that there is a lawfull care even for the things of this life. Now the practice of it stands in two things: First, in the diligent walking in a mans lawfull calling, dealing uprightly and justly therein with every one, minding only to get things honest and necessary in the sight of all men. Secondly, in leaving the successe and issue of all our labour and endevour to God, for that belongs to him: wee must use the meanes soberly and honestly, and leave the blessing to God. This godly care *Moses* shewed notably in leading the children of Israel out of Ægypt: for what God commanded him to doe, that hee did; hee goes which way God sends him, although he met with many crosses; and useth the meanes that God cals him unto, leaving the issue to God: as appeares notably at the red Sea, when they were at a wonderfull strait, having the Sea before them, the Ægyptians behinde them, and woods and mountaines on each side; yet being commanded to strike the waters with the rod of God, he shewes notable trust in Gods providence: *Feare not*, (saith he [a]) *stand still, and behold the salvation of our God.* And when *Abraham* at Gods commandement went to sacrifice his sonne, *Isaac* askes him, *My Father, where is the sacrifice?* [b] *Abraham* answers with words of faith, *My sonne, God will provide.* And thus *David went to fight against the Philistims to Keilah at Gods commandement*, though his owne men discouraged him from it: whereby it is plaine, he relied on God for the issue of the battell. Now this godly moderate care is not here forbidden, which hath respect to obedience in the duty, and for the successe depends upon Gods providence.

The *distrustfull care* is that whereby men trouble themselves about the issue of their labours; and when they have done the worke, doe not rest therewith, but vex themselves about the successe; not relying on Gods providence for the blessing, but onely on the meanes. This distrustfull care (for our better discerning of it) hath these effects: First, it oppresseth the heart, making it exceeding heavy and pensive for feare of want: where this feare is, there is this distrustfull care: for this argues a man dares

A not trust God, but would have the successe of his labour out of Gods hand in his owne. Secondly, it alureth and draweth men to use unlawfull meanes to get worldly things, as lying, fraud, injustice in false weights, measures, &c. Thirdly, it makes men weary of Gods worship, it distracts their minds in prayer, and hearing the Word; and (as Christ [b] saith) it *chokes the Word that it brings forth no fruit*: for when the minde is wholly set upon the world, there is no respect to the matters of God. And this is that care which is here forbidden, even *a distrustfull carking care*, which as the Greek word signifies, divides and distracts the minde, by troubling and perplexing it about the issue and successe of our endevours.

The Vse. That which Christ here forbids his Disciples, is the common sin of our age & time, not in a few persons, but in many: for though this distrustfull care be the disease of the heart, yet it shewes it selfe by actions in the life: For first, what is the cause of so little fruit of the Word preached, as may every where be discerned? is not (among many other) this worldly care one speciall cause? This we may see in the parable, Luk.8.14. for *the seed that light among thornes, which choaked it, is the Word preached to a heart possessed with worldly cares*: let these men observe themselves, and they shall finde, that they can neither pray, nor heare the Word, nor meditate therein without manifold distractions from these worldly thoughts. Secondly,

C there is no trade or calling without his conveiances of craft and deceit, though it doe not appeare so much in one calling as in others; and hard it is to finde them that make conscience hereof, when gain and profit may come therby; which comes from this distrustfull care in mens hearts: whereby they doubt of Gods blessing answerable to their desire, in the use of lawfull meanes onely. But sith Christ forewarnes us of this sin, we must beware it take not place in our hearts: and for the avoiding of it, wee must follow the counsel of the holy Ghost in Scripture, Psal.37.5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust in him, and he shall bring it to passe*: which is oft commended unto us, Psal.55.22. *Cast thy burthen upon the Lord, and hee shall nourish thee*: and Prov.16.3. *Rowle thy worke upon the Lord*: 1 Pet.5.7. *Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you.* In all which places we have a most worthy instruction to this effect; *not exempting men from doing the duties of their calling, but teaching them, that when they have done their endeavour, in the diligent, sober, and upright use of meanes, then they must leave the event and issue for good successe to the blessing of God.* Thus the trades-man, whose living stands by buying and selling, must be carefull and diligent about his businesse, without deceit or lying; and in so doing referre the successe of his bargaine to the blessing of God: and so must the husbandman plow and sow, and leave caring and harvest to Gods good providence. This is

the

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3

b Luk.8.14.

Distrustfull care is the fourth Sin age.

Proofe. 1

2

C

D

a Exod.14.13.

b Gen.22.7.

c 1 Chr.13.12.

d 2 Chr.32.8.

e 2 Chr.32.25.

the Apostles counsell, Phil.4.6. *Be nothing carefull*, that is, after a distrustfull or distracting sort, (as the word signifies) *but in all things let your requests be made known to God, with giving of thanks*: where it is to be marked, that *distrustfull care* is opposed to *prayer* and *thanksgiving*, as an hinderer thereof, and therefore our care must onely be to use the lawfull meanes moderately for any blessing, and then to pray to God for good successe and blessing, relying wholly thereon, that when it comes we may give him thankes.

How to leave the successe to God.

But some will say, it is hard for flesh and bloud not to be carefull of successe, how then should we be able to leave it wholly to God? *Answer.* We must lay to our hearts the blessed promises of God, made to them that depend upon his mercy and goodnesse, and labour to live by faith thereon: Psal.127.2. *It is in vaine for men to rise early, and to lie downe late, and to eat the bread of sorrow*, (meaning, while hee trusts to himselfe, or in the meanes) *but God will surely give rest to his beloved*, which serve him, and trust in him, in the use of meanes. Psal. 34. 10. *The Lyons doe lacke and suffer hunger*, though every poore beast of the field be a prey to his teeth; *but they which seeke the Lord shall lacke nothing that is good.* If wee had no more promises in the Bible, yet these were sufficient to cause us to rest upon his providence in the sober use of lawfull meanes. Againe, this must be considered, how we shall rely upon his mercy for the saving of our soules in the time of

C temptation and houre of death, that dare not trust in his providence for the things of this life. *Quest.* But what if all things goe crosse wich men, (will some say) may I not then flicke more to the means? *Ans.* Nay rather cleave the more to God, for if the blessing were in the meanes, men would not be so often crossed: God knoweth what is good for thee, better than thou thy selfe, and therefore rest contented with this providence, though he crosse thine expectation for outward blessings; want is many times better for Gods children than plenty, and affliction than peace and prosperity; as *David* found, Psal.119.67,71. and therefore God layes it upon them: Did not good *Iosia* fall before *Pharaoh Necho*? which he shuld not have done, but that God would chasten him; for [c] *not regarding the words of Pharaoh Necho, which were of the mouth of God*, perswading him not to fight against him: and also [d] *that he might be taken from seeing the evil to come*: and was not *Hezekiahs heart puffed up in the time of peace*, in somuch that *wrath* [e] *came upon him, and upon Iudah and Ierusalem.* Therfore learne to depend upon Gods providence in the moderate use of lawfull meanes, and whether he give thee blessings, or take them away, blesse his name; for it is good for thee it should be so. And thus much for the maine commandement.

Now further marke in the words, how Christ distinguisheth betweene *life* and the *body*; and

A applieth *meat and drinke* to life, and *raiment* to the body: and yet we know, that apparell serves to preserve life also, especially in cold countries. But Christ doth distinguish them for just cause; for though in cold countries, apparel serves to preserve life, as well as meat and drinke doe; yet the first and more generall use of apparell, is another matter; to wit, to hide the shame of nakednesse, which the sinne of *Adam* brought upon it: Gen. 3. 7.21. for before their fall, *the man and the woman were both naked, and were not ashamed*, Gen.2.21.

The proper end of apparell.

Here then we are to learne, that the proper and maine end of apparell, is for the bodie, to cover the shame of nakednesse that sinne hath brought upon us; which is so great, that if necessity would permit, both hands and face

B should also bee covered. The consideration whereof, as it shewes their immodesty and want of shame, that lay open the nakednesse of their brests, or other parts of their body, more than need requires; so it teacheth us, never to be proud of our apparell, but rather humbled and abashed when we put it on, or looke upon it, for it is the covet of our shame, and so an ensigne of our sinne: the theefe hath as good cause to be proud of the bolts on his heeles, or of his brand in the hand, or hole in the eare, as wee of our apparell, for as these are badges of misdemeanour, so is apparell a badge of our sinne. And on the other side, that we may have comfort in this ordinance of God for our bodies, wee must labour therein to expresse the graces of God in our hearts; as modesty, sobriety, temperance, frugality, and such like.

1 Reason against immoderate care.

Is not the life more worth than meat, and the body than raiment? Our Saviour Christ having given commandement against the immoderate care for things needfull to naturall life, lest the same should passe away without effect, doth here begin to inforce the same with divers arguments; the first whereof is in these words, taken from the creation, wherein God gives life and the body, which are better than food and raiment; from whence Christ reasons for his providence, thus: *The life is better than food, and the body than raiment: but God by creation gives life and body: and therefore will he much more give food and raiment for their preservation.*

D Seeing God gives the greater, wee need not to doubt but he will afford the lesse.

Our creation must teach us mistrust in Gods providence.

In this reason Christ teacheth us, to make right use of our creation; namely, by the consideration of it, to learne confidence in Gods providence for all things needfull to our naturall life: Job 10.8. *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and wilt thou destroy mee?* where *Iob* perswades himselfe of preservation, because God created him; and 1 Pet. 4. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commend their soules unto him in well-doing, as unto a faithfull creator*: because God is a faithfull creator, therfore in death we must rely upon him. Experience teacheth us that every

Matth.6. vers.26.

workeman is carefull to preserve the worke of his owne hands, if it lie in his power; why then should we doubt of this in our Creator, who is Almighty.

v. 26 *Behold the fowles of the heaven; for they sowe not, neither reape, nor carrie into the barnes: yet your heavenly father feedeth them. Are yee not much better than they?*

These words containe Christs second reason to diffwade his Disciples from distrustfull care for things needfull, drawne from the consideration of his providence over baser creatures than they were, for needfull provision: the reason standeth thus:

If God provide for the fowles of heaven, then much more will he provide for you:
But God provideth for the fowles of heaven, and feedeth them: therefore much more will he provide for you.

The first part of this reason is here confirmed two wayes: First, because the children of God have meanes of provition, which the fowles of the heaven want; *they sow not, neither reap, &c.* Secondly, Gods children are *better* than fowles, and therefore he will not suffer them to lacke, sith he provideth for baser things than they be: both which are so sensible and familiar, that they may induce any man to depend upon Gods providence, without distrustfull care.

Christ in propounding this reason, bids us *Behold the creatures*, that is, take a serious view of them, looke upon them wishly, and with consideration, as the word signifieth: whereby we may learne, that every childe of God ought seriously to consider the workes of God, (for that which we must do to the fowles of heaven, we must doe to all the workes of his hands) and therein labour to behold the wisdome, justice, goodnesse, love, mercy, and providence of God. This is *Salomons* lesson, Eccles.7.15. *Behold the workes of God*: and Job 36.24. *Remember thou magnifie the workes of God which men behold.* Why did God make the creatures distinctly one after another, in six severall dayes, and take a particular view of them all after hee had made them, with approbation of their goodnesse, and also sanctified the seventh day for an holy rest, both by his owne example and expresse commandement? undoubtedly, among other causes, this was one, to teach us to consider distinctly of all the works of his hands: and among other holy duties, to meditate on the Sabbath day, on the glorious workes of our Creator. This was *Davids* practice: for, Psal. 19. 1, &c. hee resembles the *heavens* to a great booke, wherein a man may reade the glory of God: and in the contemplation hereof did he exercise himselfe upon the Sabbath dayes, as we may see in the *Psalme* which he penned for the Sabbath, Psal.92.4,5. — *I will rejoyce in the workes of thine hand: O Lord, how glorious are thy works!* And they which are negligent in this duty, are here called to attendance by our Saviour Christ.

But what must wee behold in the fowles of heaven? How *they neither sow, nor reape, nor carry into barnes, &c.* that is, they use not the means of provision that man doth, which shews they have not that care which man hath. Man may lawfully bee carefull to use these meanes, for God ordaineth them for mans provision: but the fowles of the heaven goe not so farre to have care of any meanes. And this privilege of man to the meanes, doth strongly inforce Christs diffwasion against distrustfull care: for the fowles wanting such meanes are free from that care. *Quest.* How then are they provided for? *Answ.* They expect for food at Gods hand: Job 39. 3. *The birds cry unto God, wandring for lacke of meat.* Psalm.104.21. *The Lyons roaring after their prey, seeke their meat at God.* Psalm. 145. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon God, and hee giveth them meat in due season.* Psalm.149.7. *He giveth to beasts their food, and to the young ravens that crie.* But how can unreasonable creatures cry to God? *Ans.* They doe not use prayer as men doe, but yet they are said *to cry to God, and to wait on God*, because by a naturall instinct given them by creation, they seeke for that food which God ordaineth for them, and are contented therewith; so that by these phrases God would teach us, that they depend upon his providence wholly for provision, and rest contented therewith.

Vnreasonable creatures depend upon Gods providence.

Vnreasonable creatures more obedient than man.

Here then we are to observe, that the unreasonable creatures, made subject to vanitie by the sinne of man, doe come neerer their first estate, and better observe the order of Nature in their creation, than man doth: for they seeke for that which God provideth for them, and when they receive it are content, but man is deeply fallen from the state of his creation, in regard of his depending on Gods providence for temporall things: though he have the use of meanes which the fowles of heaven want, yet his heart is full fraught with distrustfull care, whether wee respect the getting or imploying of earthly things. This sheweth that man is more corrupt than other creatures, and more vile and base in this behalfe than bruit beasts: which should humble every one of us deeply under the serious consideration of our sinnes, that have so depraved our nature, that we are more rebellious to the law of our Creator, and more distrustfull in his providence, than the bruit and sensless creatures.

And yet our heavenly father feedeth them. In these words is touched a forcible reason, whereby Christ would perswade his Disciples, and in them all beleevers, to depend upon Gods

providence without distrustfull care, *God* (saith he) *is your father, yea, your heavenly father; and you are his children, therefore depend upon him*: for if [e] *earthly fathers* will provide and give good things to their children, much more will your heavenly. In this reason also is touched a meanes and way whereby a man may come to rest upon Gods providence. In the Word of God there be two kind of promises: some of everlasting life and salvation by Christ: others, of inferiour gifts and blessings concerning this life. Now if we would rely on God for temporall blessings, we must first labor to lay hold by faith on his spirituall and eternal promises; get assurance of thine adoption in Christ, and labour to know and feele that he is thy heavenly father; and then thou wilt easily depend upon his providence for temporall blessings: if thou be once perswaded truly that hee will save thy soule, how canst thou distrust him for provision for thy body? If a Kings sonne know his father will make him heire, hee will nor doubt but he will afford him food and raiment in the meane time.

[e] Matth 7.11.

Heaven come to depend upon God. providence.

Particular providence proved.

Feedeth them. That is, the fowles that neither sow, nor reape, nor carry into barnes. Here wee may observe Gods speciall and particular providence: for in reason those creatures that make no provision in summer, should starve in winter, wherein the earth affordeth no such meanes of nourishment as it doth in summer; and yet experience teacheth, that they are for the most part fatter, and fitter for the use of man in winter than in summer: what argueth this but Gods speciall providence, attending upon the silly fowles of heaven, and feeding them in the dead winter? oh then how should any childe of God distrust his providence; will hee feed birds, and neglect his owne children? it cannot be. And yet this must not muzzle an idle person, or bolster him up in the neglect of lawfull ordinary means for his provision: for God would have every man to eat his owne bread, deserving his provision by diligence in the duties of some lawfull calling: for *he that will not labour should not eat.* Howbeit wee may here learne, when all meanes faile (without our default) yet still to rely upon Gods providence: for he feeds the fowles in the dead of winter, and wee are better than they.

A motive to mercifulnesse.

Lastly, is God so mercifull to the poore fowls of heaven, to provide for them? then must wee that professe our selves to bee Gods children shew our selves to be like to our heavenly father, in exercising mercy towards all Gods creatures: *God is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that beleeve.* And wee must be followers of God as deare children, extending mercy to the poore of mankinde, because they be our owne flesh: doe good unto all, but specially to them that be of the houshold of faith. This is needfull to be urged upon our soules, for in times of dearth men *grind the faces of the poore*, by hard bargaining; the rich take advantage of poore mens want, and so make themselves fat by sucking the bloud of the poore.

v. 27 *Which of you by taking care, is able to adde one cubit to his stature?*

3. Reason against distrustfull care.

Here Christ propoundeth his *third reason*, against distrustfull and carking care for worldly things, from the *unprofitablenesse and vanitie* of it in man. The words of this reason are propounded by *way of question*: which kinde of phrase imports the *affirming* or *denying* of the thing spoken of with more vehemence. And here it hath the force of *a more vehement negation*: as if Christ had said, Undoubtedly not any of you by taking care can adde one cubit to his stature. A *cubit* is a measure taken from a part of mans bodie, being the length of the arme from the elbow, to the end of the longest finger. Now God in framing mans bodie, brings it from this length in the mothers wombe, by continuall increase adding cubit unto cubit, till at last it containe many cubits in stature, according as hee hath ordained and appointed. And looke how many cubits long God hath ordained everie man to come unto, of that stature and talnesse hee is, and no man by all his wit, skill, and carefull industrie can adde one cubit unto his stature, for that is the proper worke of the Creator; hee that gives the bodie, appoints the stature, and by his providence brings it thereto, by daily increase. Now hence Christ reasons thus, from the like; *As no man by taking care in all the meanes he can use, can augment his stature one cubit*, hee cannot doe the *least thing* this way, as [f] *Saint Luke* noteth; *no more can any man by his distrustfull care better his outward estate for things needfull to this life any whit at all:* and therefore sith it is vaine and fruitlesse to vex our hearts herewith, wee must beware of this distrustfull care.

[f] Luk.12.26.

Mans labour vaine without Gods blessing.

From this reason we may observe and gather sundrie instructions: First, that mans labour, care, and industrie is altogether vaine and fruitlesse, without the blessing of Gods providence. Psal.127.1,2. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it: Except the Lord keepe the citie, the keeper watcheth in vaine. It is in vaine for you to rise early, &c.* 1 Cor.3.7. *Neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth*, (meaning, of themselves,) *but God giveth the increase.* This point the Lord doth notably expresse by *Haggai*, saying, [g] *Ye have sowen much, and bring in little: — and he that earneth wages putteth it in a bottomlesse bag. Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little, and when it came home, I did blow upon it.* The consideration whereof must teach us to commend all the sober care and labour of our lawfull callings to God by prayer for his blessing: for it is *his blessing that maketh rich*, Prov. 10. 22. If *Paul* and *Apollos*, two most worthy

[g] Hagg. 1. 6—9.

worthy men, could doe nothing of themſelves, what ſhall wee thinke to doe? and when wee finde Gods bleſſing upon our labour, then muſt we give thankes.

A Secondly, hence wee learne that no man can better his outward eſtate in the world, for wealth and dignitie by all his care and diligence, above that which God hath appointed him to come unto: for as God hath determined of mans bodily ſtature, which no man by taking care can adde unto or alter, ſo hath he appointed in his decree what ſhall be mans eſtate, for wealth or povertie, dignitie or diſgrace, which it lies not in the power of man, or any creature to alter: indeed the diligent uſe of lawfull meanes is an argument of Gods bleſſing in outward things, and therefore muſt bee followed and exercised in ſobrietie and godlineſſe of thoſe that wait for ſuch bleſſings, becauſe ordinarily God conveyes his bleſſings by ſuch meanes; but yet the eſtate of man depends not on the meanes, but on Gods decree and pleaſure: Pſal. 75. 6, 7. *To come to preferment is neither from the Eaſt nor from the Weſt: but God is Judge: hee maketh high, and hee maketh low:* and Prov. 22. 2. *The poore and rich meet together, and God is the maker of them both.* In regard whereof wee muſt learne to depend upon God in the ſober uſe of lawfull meanes, and to reſt contented with his bleſſing thereupon be it more or leſſe: for whatſoever it is, it is that portion which God hath allotted unto us.

Alchymiſts confuted.

Thirdly, hereby are ſundrie erroneous opinions confuted and overthrown. As firſt, the opinion of them, who thinke that the temporall life of man may bee prolonged by Art, above the period ſet by God in nature: but then there may be addition made by Art to the ſet period of mans ſtature; for the will and providence of God doth equally rule in them both: the prolonging of mans life is no leſſe an action of the Creator, than the augmenting of mans ſtature. Indeed Art may helpe to preſerve life till it come to the period in nature, but further to prolong it, is beyond the Art and power of man: for *Man is not Lord over the ſpirit, to retaine the ſpirit*, Eccle. 8. 8. *God hath herein appointed his bounds which he cannot paſſe*, Job 14. 5.

Magicians and Witches confuted.

Secondly, the opinion of ſome Magicians and Witches is hereby alſo confuted, who thinke and avouch, that by enchantments they can turne their bodies into the bodies of other creatures, as cats, hares, &c. and alſo make their bodies to paſſe thorow a key-hole, or ſuch like narrow place, but this were to change nature, which is more than to adde to nature, (which yet Chriſt here denies to bee in the power of man,) and therefore it is impoſſible: theſe things are the illuſions of Satan, whereby hee bleares the eyes of ſuch as regard his lying wonders. As for that which is ſaid of [c] *Nebuchadnezzar*, that hee ſhould be turned into a beaſt, becauſe it is ſaid, *he ate graſſe like an oxe*: this we muſt know and hold, that the ſubſtance of his ſoule was not changed, neither the ſubſtance of his bodie, nor the ſhape thereof into the ſhape and ſubſtance of a beaſt, but only the hand of God was heavie upon his minde, striking him with brutiſh frenſie and madneſſe, whereupon his behaviour became brutiſh, and he lived among the beaſts of the field.

Thirdly, the opinion of the Alchymiſts is hereby alſo refuted, who pretend that they can tinne baſe metalls into better, as braſſe or lead into gold; but this is to change the nature of creatures, which is more than to adde thereto by augmenting their quantitie, which yet Chriſt denies and makes impoſſible to Art in the ſtature of man.

Merits of glorie ſhewed, with power of man.

B Fourthly, the opinion of the Papiſts for their merit of workes is hereby alſo confuted: they teach that by good works a man may merit for himſelfe a greater degree of glorie in Heaven: but conſider, if a man by all that hee can doe, cannot augment his bodily ſtature, nor his outward eſtate in this world (as we have ſhewed:) then much leſſe can he adde unto his eſtate of glorie: if the increaſe of nature be the worke of God, then much more is the gift of grace, and the increaſe of glorie: as therefore hee determines of the ſtature of the bodie, ſo much more may wee reſolve, that the ſtate of the ſoule for glorie is decreed of God, and man cannot adde thereunto. Indeed the more we glorifie God by weldoing on earth, the more is our aſſurance of greater glorie in Heaven, but yet the merit thereof is the worke of Chriſt alone, and our fruition of it the gift of God, according to the good pleaſure of his owne will.

Conc. Trid. ſeſſ. 6. can. 32.

Inordinate care for apparell.

C

V. 28 *And why care ye for rayment? learne how the lillies of the field doe grow: they labour not, neither ſpin:*

29 *Yet I ſay unto you, that even Salomon in all his glorie was not arrayed like one of theſe.*

D 30 *Wherefore if God ſo cloath the graſſe of the field, which is to day, and to morrow is caſt into the oven, ſhall hee not doe much more unto you, O yee of little faith?*

Diſtruſtfull care forbidden.

In theſe three verſes Chriſt returneth to his former commandement againſt diſtruſtfull care contained in the 25. verſe: and here urgeth one part thereof concerning *care for rayment*, and

and the other for meat and drinke, in the 31. verſe. Now what meaneth Chriſt by this manner of handling this heavenly doctrine, not only to propound it, and to urge it by ſtrong and forcible reaſons, but againe to repeat it, and urge it by peece-meale? Surely, hereby hee declares himſelfe to bee the true Doctor of his Church: for having a weighrie point of doctrine in hand, which the nature of man is unwilling to receive and practiſe, hee doth beſide the propounding and confirming of it, thus urge it by peece-meale, that hereby it may the better take place in our heart, and bee the more effectuall to bring forth obedience in our lives. And this fidelitie muſt everie one ſhew that is to teach the word of God to others: not only Miniſters, though it be their dutie ſpecially, but alſo Maſters and Parents; as Deut. 6. 7. *Thou ſhalt whet them upon thy children* (as the word ſignifies) that ſo it may more deeply enter into the heart.

Thus much of the manner of proſecuting this argument. Now wee come to the words: *And why care you for rayment?* This interrogation hath the force of a prohibition; and ſo it is the ſame with this branch of the 25. verſe, *Care not for your bodie what you ſhall put on.* Now all care for apparell is not here forbidden; for there is a lawfull godly care, whereby men ſeeke and labour uprightly, and in a ſober manner for ſuch apparell as is meet for their callings, and needfull to the health and comfort of their bodies. But the care here forbidden, is an inordinate care for apparell, joyned either with diſtruſt and feare of want, or elſe with a diſcontentedneſſe with that apparell which is meet and neceſſarie. And this is the common ſinne of this age, as the ſundrie bad practices of men and women about apparell, proceeding from this inordinate care, doe evidently declare: as firſt, the affecting of ſuperfluitie and abundance in apparell, and the following of ſtrange and forren fashions ſoone as they are taken up. Secondly, the wearing of too coſtly apparell, above their abilitie and degree: as when Servants are as fine as their Maſters, Tradeſ-men like Gentlemen, and Gentles like Nobles. Thirdly, the ſpending of much time in the curious trimming and attiring of the bodie, which might bee ſpent in better duties. This proceeds from ſome diſlike in Gods workmanſhip, as though hee had not done his part thorowly to their bodies, or they by their curioſitie could make themſelves better.

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4. Reaſon.

Now that Chriſt might remove out of mens hearts this inordinate care, he doth here enforce the commandement by a fourth reaſon, taken from his *providence over the lillies of the field*: and his reaſon is weighrie, though the ſubject of it bee meane and ſimple. It may bee framed thus:

If God cloath the lillies of the field, then doubtleſſe he will cloath you:

But God cloatheth the lillies of the field:

Therefore much more will he cloath you.

This reaſon is fully ſet downe in theſe three verſes, though the parts be inverted, by reaſon of their amplifications: for firſt, Chriſt propounds to our conſideration the *ſubject matter* whence his reaſon is drawen: *learne how the lillies of the field doe grow.* Where this muſt be marked, that Chriſt ſpeaks of *field lillies*, which have not the helpe of man, as garden-flowers have. Then he layes downe a proofe of his aſſumption, *that God cloathes them*, by removing from them the ordinarie meanes of cloathing: *They labor not, neither ſpin*, v. 28. amplifying this worke of God upon them by a comparison, wherein he preferres the glorie of them before the glory of *Salomon* in his princely array, v. 29. And then by way of inference propounds the reaſon, omitting the aſſumption, v. 30. where the firſt part and concluſion are both propounded and amplified, as wee ſhall ſee when wee come to the handling of them; for I will follow the order obſerved by Chriſt.

Vilen. field creatures are wiſer than we.

Learne how the lillies of the field doe grow. Here Chriſt makes the lillies and herbs of the field a ſchoolemaiſter unto man, yea, to his own Diſciples (for he ſpake to them.) And this hee doth for eſpeciall cauſes: Firſt, to teach them and us, that the ſilly creatures in the field doe in their kinde yeeld more obedience unto God than man doth, and that man is more rebellious unto God than they are: hence [a] *Iſay* calls *heaven* and *earth* to hearken to his rebuke of the Jewes for their ingratitude: and the Prophet rebuking *Ieroboam* for his idolatrie, cries, [b] *O Altar, Altar, thus ſaith the Lord*: *Ieremie* rebuking *Iechoiakib*, calls to the *earth to heare*, Jer. 22. 29. and *Ezekiel* muſt prophecie to the *mountaines*, Ezek. 6. 3. By all which they would ſhew, that if theſe unſenſible creatures had reaſon as man hath, they would bee more obedient to the will of their Creator than man is. Secondly, hereby Chriſt would teach his Diſciples and us, that though wee have the creatures, and behold and uſe them daily, yet partly through blindneſſe and ignorance, and partly through negligence, wee doe not diſcerne in them, nor learne from them thoſe good things which wee ought to doe: *For the inviſible things of God, that is, his eternall power and Godhead, being conſidered in his works, are ſeene by the creation of the world*, Rom. 1. 20. This then is a checke to our dullneſſe and negligence in the things of God: for what ſhall wee doe in matters of ſalvation, when in theſe inferiour matters wee may learne of the unſenſible creatures?

a Iſa. 1. 2.

b 1 King. 13. 2.

But what muſt wee learne in the lillies? *How they grow.* And this is a thing to be marked, for in the winter ſeaſon they lie dead in the earth, as though they were not; they are covered with froſt and ſnow: and yet in the ſpring time and ſummer, they ſpring up with ſtalkes, leaves, and flowers of ſuch glorious colours, [illegible] the glorie of [illegible] all his [illegible]

Heave-

whence comes this, is it of themselves, or from A man? surely neither; for they are field-lilies, this only comes from the word of creation given out by God, when hee made the creatures, saying, *Let the earth bring forth the greene herbs, &c.* from this working and operative word of God, comes the earth to have power and vertue to send out the glorious lilies and everie other herb. Now then (to apply this to the purpose intended by Christ) the same God that by his operative word gives this glorious being everie yeare to field-lilies, hath given out a word of providence touching his servants, that if they trust in him, using lawfull meanes moderately, they shall have raiment sufficient, and all things else that be needfull to this life. Here then is nothing wanting but trust in God in the sober use of ordinarie meanes, for such shall be as fire of raiment by Gods providence, as lillies are to grow & blossom in the spring-time & summer: and this were sufficient to perswade us unto moderate care, though nothing more had been said.

But hee addeth, *they labour not, neither spin:* This denial of the use of meanes unto them, whereby they should bee arrayed, as it proves directly that God alone arrayes them with glorious colours; so it strongly enforceth the duties of contentation upon us, relying on Gods providence, without distracting care: because beside our title to Gods providence not inferiour to the lillies of the field, we have allowed unto us for our rayment the use of meanes which they want: and therefore howsoever no man, under pretence of depending on Gods providence, may hence take occasion to live idly, neglecting the ordinarie lawfull meanes to procure things honest and needfull: yet hereby Christ would give assurance to all that trust in him and serve him, that though all meanes should faile them, (so it be not through their default) yet will hee provide things needfull for them.

29. *And yet I say unto you, that even Salomon in all his glorie, &c.* These words containe an amplification of the second part of Christs reason, to wit, that God doth not only *cloath* the lillies, but cloath them *in most glorious array*, even above *the glorie of Salomon in all his royalties.* And this amplification is to be marked, because *Salomons* glorie was extraordinarie, by speciall gift from God, above his desire or expectation, as wee may see, 1 King. 3. 12. And yet Christ saith, that each *field-lillie* is more gloriously arrayed by Gods providence than *Salomon* was at any time.

This amplification serves; first, to checke and controll the folly of them that are proud in apparell, and nice and curious in arraying themselves. This is the common sinne of this age, wherein for attire everie sort almost exceed their abilitie and degree. But why should wee bee proud of any apparell, for when wee have done all wee can to make our selves never so gay, yet wee come short of the flowers of the field in glorious array? for what cloth or silke is so white as the lillie? what purple is like the violet? what crimson or scarlet comparable to divers flowers of such colours? Art indeed may doe much, but herein it must stoope to Nature. Now if wee cannot come neere the herbs and flowers which we tread under our feet, and cast into the fornace, why should we be puffed up with any gayneesse in our apparell?

Secondly, this teacheth us, that all worldly pompe is but vanitie: for in glorie and beautie it comes short of the flower of the field, and yet what is more fraile and transitorie than the flower, that is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven? This the Holy Ghost would teach us, by comparing the *glorie of man* B to the *flower of grasse*, 1 Pet. 1. 24. and seeing that the *fashion of this worlde goeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 31. wherefore (as the Apostle there saith) *Wee must use this world as though wee used it not:* for *Salomons* conclusion is true of all earthly things, *Vanitie of vanities, all is vanitie*, Eccles. 1. 2. And yet wee must not here imagine that Christ condemnes the glorie of *Salomon*, though he thus debase it below the flower of the field: for it was the gift of God in extraordinarie favour, 1 King. 3. 13. So that howsoever the word of God condemne pride and curiositie in attire, and superfluitie therein, yet it alloweth unto Princes, and personages of great state, the use of gorgeous and costly rayment; and therefore *Ioseph* being advanced to dignitie, was arrayed C *in garments of fine linnen, had a ring on his finger, and a chaine of gold about his necke*, Gen. 41. 42. And that which *Luke* saith of *Agrippa* and *Bernice, that they came in with great pompe* to heare *Paul*, Act. 25. 23. may as well be taken in good part, as in evill.

Worldly pompe is all vanitie.

V. 30 *Wherefore if God so cloath the grasse of the field, which is to day, and to morrow is cast into the oven: shall he not doe much more unto you, O yee of little faith?*

D Here Christ propounds and applyes this reason to his Disciples and hearers; and in this application enforceth it, by putting a manifest difference between men and the herbs of the field, preferring man far before them. The prehemiuence of man above the flowers of the field, stands in these things: first, the herbs were made for mans use, and not man for them; for besides other uses, they serve to fuell to the oven, as Christ here noteth. Secondly, the herb of the field is to day, and to morrow is not, for being burnt or consumed, it ceasith to be at all: But it is not so with man, for though he be burnt or consumed, yet he is not brought to nothing, but his being remaineth still I, by reason of his immortall

Man preheminence above the herbs of the field.

immortall soule, which though it had beginning, yet never shall have end. And herein hee far excelleth them: for though herbs and trees live for a time, yet their life ariseth from the matter whereof they consist, and so vanisheth with it: but the soule of man is a different substance from the bodie, and vanisheth not, though the bodie perish. This difference is plaine in the creation: for God commanded [a] *the earth to bring forth herbs and trees with their life and substance:* but when hee created man, though he made his *bodie of the dust of the earth*, yet *his soule came from God:* for [c] *hee breathed into his face the breath of life.* And herein man excels not only the herbs of the field, but all beasts and fowles: for though they, besides life have sense and motion from their soules, yet their soules (whether they be qualities or substances, it here skilleth not) arising from the matter whereof their bodies subsist, are mortall and vanish to nothing when the bodie perisheth; so as a beast burnt up is no beast, but a dead man is a man though his bodie bee burnt to nothing, because his soule lives for ever; yea, and his bodie, though eaten up of beasts, or consumed with fire, by vertue of Gods ordinance, shall one day rise againe, and be re-united to the soule: yea, the dead bodies of the elect, by vertue of the covenant of grace, have not only relation to their soules, but a spiritiall union with Christ: for [f] *they sleepe in him*, and by his power shall one day be raised up to glorie. And this preheminence Christ would teach us, when he calleth *God, B the God of Abraham*, who was dead in regard of his bodie long before; and yet, saith hee, *God is the God, not of the dead*, (that is, which have no being at all) *but of the living.* Now this preferment of man above the creature, doth greatly inforce the duties upon him, to depend upon Gods providence without distrustfull care: for if God cloath baser creatures with glorious array, doubtlesse he will not suffer man his more noble creature to want, as the conclusion following doth declare.

Shall he not doe much more unto you, O yee of little faith! That is, shall hee not much more cloath you. Now he amplifieth this conclusion by a reproofe, whereby hee would enforce his reason more strongly upon them, saying, *O yee of little faith.* In which reproofe two points are to be considered: the persons reproved, and the cause thereof. The persons are Christs chosen Disciples, whom he doth not here reprove for want of faith simply, but for the weaknesse and small measure of it; because their doubting and distrust in Gods providence was greater than their faith.

Two degrees of faith. 1

Here then wee may observe *a distinction of faith* in regard of degree and measure; to wit, that beside that *full assurance*, whereby a man so resteth on Gods promises, that hee *nothing doubteth through unbeleefe*, as it is said of *Abraham*, Rom. 4. 20. there is *a weake faith* mingled with much doubting, such as was in

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Christs Disciples at that time. And howsoever that doubting, which is in weake faith, be evill, and here reproved; yet the faith it selfe is true faith, and such as brings a man to the state of adoption and of salvation: for Christ before this reproofe, acknowledged of his Disciples that they were Gods children, calling *God their heavenly Father.* If any shall say or thinke that this weake faith cannot save a man, because his unbeleefe being more than his faith, shall have more force to condemne him, than his faith to save him: *I answer*, That no man is saved by his faith, because it is perfect without doubting; but because thereby hee layeth hold on Gods mercie in Christ: now a weake faith may doe this truly, though not so perfectly, and with such comfort as a strong faith doth: and the doubting and unbeleefe that is in weake faith cannot condemne us, if so be wee bewaile our unbeleefe, and use meanes diligently to come by a full assurance: for by this weake faith we are in Christ: and in him all our wants and sins are pardoned. Which point must carefully bee observed and remembred, for the stay and comfort of their soules, that have in them but this weake faith, and are troubled much with distrust and doubting. And this is many a true childe of Gods estate: for everie one cannot attaine to *Abrahams full assurance:* but bee not discouraged, *O thou of little faith*; thy doubting and distrust may trouble and grieve thee; only labour diligently in the meanes for further increase, and by thy weake faith desire to lay hold on Christ; and so shall all thy wants be covered, and thy sinnes pardoned: for endlesse is Gods mercie in this behalfe, *hee will not breake the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*, Isa. 42. 3.

A comfort to them that have weake faith.

II. Point. The cause why Christ doth thus reprove them for their small faith, is *their distrust in God for rayment*; as if hee should say, whereas you doubt whether your heavenly father will provide sufficient rayment for you, notwithstanding you see hee arrayes his baser creatures in glorious manner; even for this cause are you to be blamed for small things.

A propertie of saving faith.

Herethen wee are to observe a speciall point touching the propertie of true saving faith; namely, that it doth not only lay hold on the mercie of God for the pardon of sinne, and life everlasting in Christ; but on his promises also for temporall blessings that concerne this life. Neither must this seeme strange to any: and to make it plaine, consider that the promises of God in Scripture are of two sorts: principall, & inferiour. The *principall promise* is of Christ our Redeemer, God and man, and of remission of sinne, and life everlasting by him. The *inferiour promises* are of temporall blessings: as food, rayment, health, peace, libertie, &c. and these depend upon the maine promise of Christ, so farre forth as they are for our good: for [b] *in Christ all the promises of God*, whether they concerne life eternall, or this temporall life, *are yea, and amen;*

Gods promises two-fold. 1 2

b 2 Cor. 1. 20.

men, that is, sure and certaine to Gods children. And hence it is, that when by true faith a man layes hold on the maine promise of God in Christ, he doth withall apprehend the promises of God for temporall blessings: the heart that faith by faith, *God will pardon my sin, and save my soules*, will say also by the same faith, *God will give mee food and rayment, and all things sufficient for this life*. This *Abraham*, [i] by the same faith whereby hee was justified, *beleeved Gods promise, that hee should have a sonne in his old age*: and *Noah* [k] beleeved Gods promise of his preservation in the Arke, by the *same faith* whereby he was made *heire of righteousnesse*. This point must be observed, and the order remembred, wherein faith layes hold upon the promises; First, it apprehends mercie in Christ, and then providence for this life. Now hence wee learne, that as we looke to bee saved by our faith after death, so we must live by faith in this world; if wee relie upon his mercie for our soules, wee must depend upon his providence for our bodies: how this is done we shall see afterward; for how should wee cast our selves upon Gods mercie for the Kingdome of Heaven, if wee cannot depend upon his providence for food and rayment?

Lastly, hereby wee may try our faith what it is, true or fained; weake or strong: for this Christ here tels us, that the more we are distracted with worldly cares, the lesse is our beleefe in God: for distrustfull care comes from unbeleefe in Gods providence: and the lesse we trust in God for temporall things, the lesse doe wee beleeve eternall mercies, for the same faith layes hold on both: but if we can truly depend upon God for temporall blessings in the sober use of lawfull meanes, then wee shall relie upon his mercie for the salvation of our soules. This triall is not made in prosperitie, for when God sends abundance, everie one will trust in him: but when want comes, then is the triall of thy faith; if then thou relie on God, though meanes faile, thy faith is strong: but if thy heart be oppressed with sorrow and feare, and thou make no conscience of unlawfull meanes, so it may supply thy want; then suspect thy selfe, thy faith is weake, or none at all: for *the just shall live by faith* in all estates.

V. 31 *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drinke? or wherewith shall wee bee cloathed?*

Here Christ againe repeateth his commandement against distrustfull care given in the 25. verse. The reasons of his repetition be these: First, to set an edge upon the commandement, that so it may more sharply and deeply enter into their hearts, as we said before. Secondly, to further his Disciples in the practice of faith, for by this often repetition he gives them occasion to meditate and thinke upon the duties the oftner, whereby their faith must needs be much confirmed: for this we must know for our direction to get and strengthen true faith in our hearts, that a man is not a meere patient in the receiving and strengthening of this grace; it comes not from God to us, as visions did to the Prophets in a dreame in the night, or as the print of the seale is set into the wax, but God workes it in the use of ordinarie meanes. And therefore if wee would have faith wrought or increased in us, we must doe that which by nature we may doe; to wit, heare the word preached and read, we must meditate therein, and labour so to urge the promises of God upon our owne hearts; yea, wee must doe what wee can, to stirre up in our hearts a desire to beleeve, and to strive against doubting and distrust, and therefore must give our selves to prayer, with sighs and groanes to God, for the working of his spirit in our hearts.

How distrustfull care maybe discerned.

Now touching this commandement against distrustfull care, we handled it in the 25. verse, shewing how far our care must goe for things needfull, and where it must stay. It must extend it selfe to the diligent use of lawfull ordinarie meanes to procure things needfull, and there stay; giving place to faith to wait upon Gods providence for the blessing of our endeavours. The distrustfull care which perplexeth the heart about the successe of our lawfull labours, is that which Christ forbids, and it is that evill sicknesse which infects most mens soules, as they may easily discerne by observing these things: *What is it, that ofs breakes their sleepe in the nights; what comes first into their thoughts when they awake; and what their mindes runne most upon all the day long; and wherea bouts they can take greatest paines, with most delight and least weariness*. If it bee for the things of this world, then distrustfull care infects their soules, which wee must strive against, and learne to live by faith.

Here only observe how Christ describes this unlawfull care by the effects of it in distrustfull persons, bringing them in, saying, *What shall we eat? what shall we drinke? or wherewith shall we be cloathed?* And thus indeed they use to complaine, especially when they have great charges and slender meanes, or else doe sustaine any great losses, then, *How shall we live? what shall we doe?* and such like speeches of distrust: which Christ here justly reproves, because they blame God for his dealing towards them; as though hee had no care of them, or would not provide things for them. Wee therefore must learne to shut our mouthes against distrustfull thoughts, and beware we murmure not nor complaine of his dealing towards us. When [l] *Aarons* two sonnes *Nadab* and *Abihu* were both slaine for offering strange fire, *Moses* tels him *it was the Lords doing, who would be glorified in all that come*

l Levit. 10. 3.

come neere him; then the Text saith, *Aaron held his peace*. And *David* notably testifieth his contentation in Gods providence, Psal. 39. 2. *I held my peace and said nothing*: yea, verse. 9. *I should have bin dumbe and not have opened my mouth, because thou Lord didst it*. Excellent is that saying of the Lord, Ho. 10. 15. *In rest and quietnesse shall ye be saved, in quietnesse & confidence shall bee your strength*: meaning, that by patience and contentation a man shewes strong confidence in God: so that though Gods dealing seeme never so hard, we must beware of impatient words and murmuring thoughts, endeavouring to say with [m] *Eli, It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth good in his eyes*: and with [n] *Job, though he kill me, yet will I trust in him*.

m 1 Sam. 3. 18.
n Job 13. 15.

V. 32 *For after all these things seeke the Gentiles: for your heavenly Father knoweth that yee have need of all these things.*

Fifth reason against distrustfull care.

This verse containes Christs fifth and sixth reasons, to dissuade his hearers from distrustfull care. The fifth is drawne from the practice of the Gentiles, and it standeth thus:

That which the Gentiles doe which know not God, you must not doe (they doing amisse:)
But the Gentiles seeke thus distrustfully for things needfull: Therefore you must not do so.

The words in the originall whereby Christ declareth this behaviour of the Gentiles, bee more emphatical than our translation doth expresse: for they import that the Gentiles *for themselves to seeke, or seek with all their might*. Which must be observed, because it is not a sin simply to seeke things necessary, but wholly to give our selves thereto, that is the sinne; because it proceeds from distrust in God. *Quest.* Why did the Gentiles thus wholly give themselves to seeke to things necessary? *Ans.* Because they knew not the true God, nor his providence; they were not acquainted with his Word, as *David* faith. And this was the state of all the world before Christs comming, the Jewes only excepted, and their fore-fathers, with some few Proselytes, who by conversing with Gods people were converted to true Religion.

Sin of Gentiles.

Use 1. Vniversall grace confuted.

This point well observed; first, overthrowes the opinion of *universall grace*, as a meere devise of mans braine: for if the Gentiles knew not the true God, how should they know the way to life? if God gave them not so much grace, whereby they could depend upon his providence for the things of this life, much lesse did he give them grace to beleeve, and to be saved if they would.

2 Vnbelieving like Pagans.

Secondly, this shewes that they who set their hearts upon the world, and give themselves to seeke earthly things, are Gentiles and Pagans; they have not yet attained to this principle of Christianity, to depend upon Gods providence by faith: they see no providence, and so rely onely upon the meanes whereby they sacrifice to their owne paines and industry, and so make themselves their owne God. This is the state of many among us, who beare the name of Christians, but in deed and practise are as Turkes and Pagans: and this reason alone well weighed, is sufficient to move any Christian heart in a moderate care to seeke earthly things.

Thirdly, marke the ground of this reason; Christs Disciples had the true God for their God, which the Gentiles had not, and therefore they must differ from the Gentiles in their behaviour. This teacheth us, that in all things Gods children must be unlike the heathen: for *In evill things we must forsake them, and in all things that be good we must excell them*. The sonne of a Prince will not shew himselfe like a begger in any thing; no more should the childe of God, in any thing conforme himselfe unto the world. O then how worthy doe we walke of our vocation: for the very sinnes of the heathen are rise among us, as uncleannesse, drunkennesse, slandering, and oppression; nay, many among us exceed the Pagans in merciless dealing towards the poore: for they never knew that Christ came for releefe in the person of his poore, and yet many among them were more merciffull, than many now adaies that beare the name of Christians: for doe not the poore sometime die for want of releefe? and doe not many among us make a gaine of Gods judgement upon the poore, selling their commodities dearest, when the poore have greatest want and need? well, if wee will approve our selves to be Gods peculiar ones, let us be ashamed to bee like the heathen in any evill, or not to goe beyond them in that which is good.

3 Christians must in all things be vnlike the heathen.

For your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.

Sixth reason against distrustfull care.

These words containe Christs sixth reason to his Disciples against distrustfull care, drawn from Gods speciall providence over them: and it also includes an answer to a secret objection against Christs command: for some man might say: If we may not be carefull for things needfull, who shall provide them? Christ here answers: *You must not be distrustfully carefull, for you have a Father in Heaven, who knowes whereof you have need, and careth for you. Now looke whereof God takes care in your behalfe, you need not trouble your selves further than the sober use of lawfull meanes: But God your heavenly Father takes notice of your estate, and will provide that which is best for you: and therefore you need not to vex your minds there about.*

A most worthy reason, and alone sufficient

to drive us from distrustfull care: for this acquaintetth us with Gods particular and speciall providence over us, taking notice of our estate whatsoever it is, and disposing it to the best. In regard whereof we must learne contentation in all estates of this life, in sicknesse, as in health; in trouble, as in peace; and in want as well as in abundance; for whatsoever our estate be, it is according to the good pleasure of our heavenly Father, who is infinite in power and wisdome, both knowing what is best, and able to turne all to our good, as we shall surely find by comfortable experience, if by faith we depend upon him. This *David* knew well, and therefore saith, [a] *Yee will not feare though he walke thorow the valley of the shadow of death*; why? *for thou art with me, thy rod and staffe*: that is, thy Spirit, thy Word and providence *comfort me*. If our hearts were fetled in this point, wee should not be impatient in distresse, nor dead hearted in want; nay, it would make us cheerefull in the houre of death: for hereby we should be assured that these estates were better for us than peace, wealth, or life it selfe, because they come by the will of our heavenly Father, who knoweth whereof we have need: and therefore let us labour by faith to be assured of our adoption, that we may know God to be our Father, and then by the same faith wee shall be easily assured, that he will tume all things that befall us to our good.

V. 33 *But first seeke the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, and all these things shall be ministred unto you.*

Our Saviour Christ having by six severall arguments dissuaded his Disciples from distrustfull care, doth here shew unto them what care that is which ought alwaies to possesse their hearts; to wit, *Care after the kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse*. And this care he imposeth upon them by expresse command, saying, *First seeke ye the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse*: and then urgeth the entertaining of it, by an effectuall reason, *and all these things shall be ministred unto you*.

The Exposition. There bee two things here injoyned us to seeke; *Gods kingdome, and righteousnesse*: and of both these Christ saith, *First seeke*, that is, before all, and above all worldly things, let your principall care and endeavour be, to procure these unto your selves. By *kingdom of God* is here meant, *a state and condition of man in this life, whereby in Christ he enjoyes the favour of God, and hath right to everlasting life*. This very estate of man is in Scripture called the *Kingdome of God*, and the *kingdome of heaven*, because whosoever is in this estate, hath sure right and interest to Gods glory in Heaven, and God here rules in him, as a King ruleth in his Kingdome. The *Kingdome of God* is

Matth. 6. vers. 33.

Gods Kingdome in two degrees.

A only one, and yet it hath two degrees; the first in grace, and the second in glory. The *kingdome of grace* is that spirituall regiment which God exercisetb in man, or in his Church, by his Word and Spirit in this life; and it is the first step or entrance into Gods heavenly Kingdome. The *Kingdome of glorie* is the full full fruition of immediate fellowship with the blessed Trinitie, by meanes of Jesus Christ in the highest heavens after this life. Now both these degrees are here understood by the Kingdome of God. The second thing to bee thus sought for, is *his righteousnesse*, that is, the righteousnesse of God, and not as some translate it, *the righteousnesse thereof*, that is, of Gods kingdome; for the words will not beare that translation. And the seeking of Gods righteousnesse

B is here added for speciall cause: to let us see by way of explication, when wee have obtained for our selves the Kingdome of God: for Gods Kingdome stands in *righteousnesse*, and then doth God rule in man, when he makes him partaker of his righteousnesse. Now by *righteousnesse of God*, we must here understand the obedience which Christ our mediatour performed for us in fulfilling the Law, and in his sufferings. This is the very ground-worke and foundation of Gods Kingdome among men: hereof *Paul* speaketh ofe, Rom. 1. 17. *For by it*, that is, the Gospel, *the righteousnes of God is revealed from faith to faith*: and Rom. 3. 21, 22. *Now is the*

Gods righteousnesse is Christs obedience.

C *righteousnesse of God made manifest*, &c. and 2 Cor. 5. 21. *God made him to be sin for us, which knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousnesse of God in him*. And it is so called for divers respects; *First*, because it is freely given us of God to be our righteousnesse in his sight: and man cannot attaine unto it of himselfe by any worke of nature or of grace, without the gift of God. *Secondly*, because God will accept this obedience of Christ at the day of judgement, for his Elect, as satisfying his justice, and the rigour of the Law, which no righteousnesse of man can doe. *Thirdly*, because it is the righteousnesse of that person who is God: for Christ is both God and man, and though hee obeyed the Law, and suffered death, as he was man, yet that obedience was performed by that person

D who was also God. *Adams* righteousnesse by creation was in himselfe, but hee lost it by his fall: but our righteousnesse is in Christ, out of us; and therefore he is said to [b] *be made righteousnesse unto us of God*. But how should we get this righteousnesse, seeing it is in Christ? *Ans.* It is made ours by imputation, for when wee truly repent of our sinnes, and beleeve in Christ, God accepts the obedience of Christ for us, as if wee had perfectly satisfied his justice, and done his will in our owne persons. Now with this imputed righteousnesse, wee must understand and joyne the fruit hereof in us, which is *sanctification*, or *renewed holinesse*; whereby we are enabled to walke before God in new obedience, bringing forth the fruits of

Why it is so called.

1

2

3

b 1 Cor. 1. 30.

righte-

The meaning.

righteousnesse: for these two are never severed; A whom God justifies by the righteousnesse of Christ, them he sanctifies by his Spirit. The full meaning then of Christs commandement here is this; *First seeke, &c.* that is, above all things in this world, let your principall care be to procure unto your selves the Kingdome of God; that is, that state of grace whereby you may enjoy Gods favour in Christ, being justified by his obedience, and sanctified by his Spirit, whereby you walke in good workes.

All are naturally out of Gods Kingdome.

The use. First, by this commandement of Christ, to seeke *Gods Kingdome*, we may gather that by nature wee are all out of Gods Kingdome, destitute of the grace and favour of God, and indeed under the power of Satan, and in his kingdome of darknesse. This the holy Ghost shewes in calling *Satan, The god of this world*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. and *The prince of this world*, Joh. 12. 31. because all the world naturally are vassals unto him, yeelding him homage in the workes of sinne; and therefore is he called the [c] *Prince that ruleth in the aire, that workes in the children of disobedience*. And this

c Eph. 2. 2.

naturall misery is justly come upon us: for seeing we refuse to yeeld subjection unto God in his Kingdome, are not we worthily left to the power of Satan, to bee made his slaves and drudges? Now that men live naturally out of Christs Kingdome, may appeare by the course of their lives; for howsoever most men can bee contented to beare the badge of Christ in outward profession, hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments; yet in heart and life they doe homage to the Devill, for they pull their necks from the yoke of Christ, and runne with greedinesse to the workes of sinne; they account a strict endeavour after morall obedience to be curiositie and precisenesse, and when they bee dehorted from unlawfull gaine, and vaine pleasures, they will not heare, nor consent; whereby in effect they say to God with wicked men in *Iob*, [d] *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy waies*: and with the wicked Citizens, [e] *We will not have this man to raigne over us*.

d Iob 21. 14.

e Luke 19. 14.

To get Gods Kingdome, must bee our chiefe care.

Secondly, here Christ would teach us, that our *principall care above all other things must be to win for our selves the Kingdome of God*: I shall not need to prove this to be our duty, seeing it is the onely thing which Christ here intends to commend unto us, and that by expresse command. But some will aske, how we shall win and get for our selves the Kingdome of God? *Ans.* We must doe three things for the obtaining of it: First, wee must come to the place where this Kingdome is to be found. Secondly, we must then enter into it. Thirdly, wee must wait for the full possession of it.

The meanes.

1 Come where it is.

For the first: This *Kingdome* is not to bee found in all places, but there onely where God doth manifest and reveale the same to the sons of men; & that is in the *assemblies of the Saints*, where the publike ministerie of reconciliation

B is dispensed; for there God holds out this kepter, and offers himselfe to bee Lord and King unto men: and therefore *David* calls this ministerie of the Word, *The rod or sceptre of Gods power*, Psal. 110. 2. and in the parable of the sower, Matth. 13. 19. the Gospell preached is called *The word of the kingdome*, because hereby God reveales *this Kingdome unto men, and translates them into it*, Colos. 1. 13. And for the same cause, in the parable of the field, Matth. 13. 24. is the same ministery of the Gospell called expressly the *Kingdome of God*. And therefore when the Church demands of Christ, where she shall find him, he bids her follow the *steps of the flockes to the tents of the Shepherds*: Can. 1. 7. that is, the assemblies of the Saints, to the preaching of Gods ministers: and therefore, if ever we looke to get this Kingdome, wee must diligently frequent the ministery of the Word, and labour to profit by it, because hereby God doth not onely reveale, but conveigh his Kingdome unto men.

Secondly, when wee have found this Kingdome, we must seeke to *enter* into it; for it is not enough to be where it is, or to have it among us, for so the Phariisies had in the time of Christ, Luk. 11. 20. Now wee cannot enter in of our selves without the speciall work of Gods holy spirit; so saith our Saviour Christ, Mat. 18. 3. *Except ye be converted, & become as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdome of God*: where two things are required in him that would enter into this Kingdome; To *become as little children*, and *to be converted*. We become

2 Enter into.

C as little children in humility and meeknesse, and freedom from pride and disdaine; for we know the child of a Prince will without disdaine associate himselfe in play with a poore mans child: and so wee in confidence of our owne sinnes, must be humbled in our selves, and made base in our owne eyes, laying aside our natural pride, and selfe-love, and disdain of others: for a heart swelling with pride and selfe-love, cannot enter into the strait gate of this Kingdome. Again, we must bee *converted* and *regenerate* by the Spirit of God: for [f] *Except a man be borne again of water, and of the spirit, he cannot see the Kingdome of God*. This conversion is not a

f Ioh. 3. 5.

What conversion is.

D change of the substance of the soule, or of the body, or of the faculties or parts thereof, but only of their evill qualities and actions; whereby the image of Satan in sinne and corruption is abolished, and the Image of God renued, for knowledge, righteousnesse, and true holinesse both in heart and life. When this worke of regeneration is truly begun in us, then doe we enter into Gods kingdome, even in this life; for herein true ignorant deceive themselves, that thinke we enter not before the time of death.

Thirdly, wee must *wait for the fruition and full possession of it*: this wee cannot get before the day of death, and therefore wee must endeavour our selves all our life long after our conversion, to keepe faith and a good con-

3 Wait for full possession.

science, walking in righteousnesse and true holinesse before God, and in the practice of love, uprightnesse, and mercy towards our brethren. When the question is, *Who shall dwell in Gods Tabernacle, and rest in his holy mountaine*; that is, remaine a true member of Gods Church for ever? Psal. 15. 1. the answer is, v. 2. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousnesse.* Hereby we testifie our selves to be already entred: for Gods Kingdome stands in *righteousnesse*, Rom. 14. 17. And thus have Gods children done that have waited for this Kingdome, Mat. 25. 4. *The wise virgins tooke oile in their vessels to light their lamps when the bridegroom came.* And *Ioseph of Arimathea*, that noble counseller, who waited for the Kingdome of God, was *a good man and a just*, Luk. 23. 50, 51.

This we see the way to get this Kingdome for our selves: now the necessity of our endevour in these duties with all care and diligence appeares by this, that out of this estate, for true interest to this Kingdom, is nothing indeed but wofull misery under the curse of God, and the power of Satan in the kingdome of darknesse: but in the fruition of this Kingdom is true happinesse: here is [a] *righteousnesse, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*: yea, [b] *joy unspeakable and glorious*: for [c] *the things that eye hath not seene, eare hath not heard, neither ever entred into the heart of man to think, hath God prepared for them that love him*: and they are all to be had in this his Kingdome. Wherefore as wee desire to escape the woe and misery of the Devils kingdome, and to be partakers of the joyes of Heaven; so let us looke unto the performance of the former duties, shewing herein the resolution of the *wise Merchant*, that parted with all he had to get *that pearle of price*, Mat. 13. 45. This Kingdome of God is here set out unto us, like a City with suburbs, and two gates; the suburbs of this City, are those assemblies where the Word of God is truly preached and dispensed; and hereinto come not onely the Elect and godly, but hypocrites and reprobates. The first gate is the *true state of grace*, whereinto the Elect of God alone doe enter by regeneration; in which estate they continue in this life, going on from one degree of grace unto a greater, with endevour in all things to keep faith and a good conscience both towards God and men, and so wait to enter the gate of glory, which is set open unto them, and they enter in at the houre of death. And therefore let us not deceive our owne soules, as the foolish virgins did with their burning lamps, and content our selves that we come to Church, and live civilly; though these be good things, yet an hypocrite may goe thus farre: all this while we are but in the suburbs of this Kingdome: but if ever we looke for the glory of Heaven, we must in this life enter the state of grace by regeneration, and become new creatures.

a Rom. 14. 17.
b 1. Pet. 1. 8.
c 1. Cor. 2. 9.

This much of the commandement. The *reason* to enforce it, is a gracious and bountifull promise: *And all these things shall be ministred unto you.* The words are very significant in the originall: for the phrase which Christ useth, is borrowed from bargainers, to this effect: as those who sell Corne, or other things by measure or weight, use to give some over-plus to better the bargaine on the buyers part; even so the Lord promiseth to those that seek his kingdome and righteousnesse, beside the fruition thereof, to give, or *cast unto them*, as the Word imports, food, and raiment, and all things needfull to this life. *Quest.* How is this true, seeing we reade that Gods children have beene many times destitute of things necessarie; as *Paul was oft in hunger and thirst, in fastings, in cold and nakednesse*, 2 Cor. 11. 27. and many whom the world was not worthy of, were *destitute, afflicted, and tormented, wandring up and downe in sheep-skins, and goats-skins*, Heb. 11. 37. *Answ.* Christs promise in this place, and all other made of temporall blessings, must be understood with the exception of the crosse; that is, they shall have such and such blessings, unlesse it please God by the want thereof, to correct them for some sinnes, or to exercise their faith in the triall of their patience.

The use. First, by this promise of Christ, we have the most excellent direction of him that is wisdome it selfe, how to order our selves in seeking for all temporall blessings needfull to this life; namely, we must *first seeke Gods Kingdome and his righteousnesse*, in the performance of those duties that may bring us thereunto; and then *all these needfull things* for this life, as food and raiment, *shall be cast unto us*, in the sober use of ordinary meanes. The reason hereof is plaine: for Gods Kingdom is mans chiefe good and happinesse, and all temporal blessings depend thereupon as appurtenances to the principall, as it were intailed thereon; and therefore he that would have these dependants, must get unto himselfe the Kingdome of God, which is the principall. *While the arke of the covenant was in Obed-Edoms house, God blessed him and all that hee had*, 2 Sam. 6. 11. How much more then shall God blesse them that receive his holy Spirit to rule in their heart by grace? for as *David* saith, the godly man shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water: and whatsoever hee doth shall prosper. By the blessing of God we have had his Kingdome among us for many yeeres in this nation, and God hath given us with it peace and protection with great abundance of temporall blessings. Indeed God hath sundry wayes corrected us, and laid his heavy hand upon us in sundrie judgements; as plague, famine, &c. and often shaken his rod at us in the hand of our enemies, and all because we have not received the word of his Kingdome, nor yeelded obedience to it as we ought; yea, and we may feare the fulnesse of his wrath, unlesse we repent and amend of this sinne especially. But if we would set our selves to seeke this Kingdome, we needed not to feare

Matt. 6. verse 33.

How to seeke for temporall blessings.

feare the want of any needfull blessing; for so God promised to his people, to give them abundance of all things, if they would obey his commandements, which are the lawes and statutes of his Kingdome, Deut. 28. 1, 2, &c.

How poore men may have sufficiency.

This point then is to bee observed for our direction in particular. Art thou a poore man, and wouldest have sufficient food and raiment for thy temporall life? then first, set thy heart to seeke Gods Kingdome, follow the Word, and labour therein for regeneration and new obedience; and doubt not, but if thou be upright and diligent in thy lawfull calling, thou shalt finde sufficient for this life. *Quest.* If this be the way to get sufficient, how comes it that we have so many beggars that wander up and downe from doore to doore? *Answ.* They are (for the most part) a cursed generation, which have no regard to Gods ordinances, either for their soules or bodies; they joyne not themselves to any setled congregation for the obtaining of Gods Kingdome, and so this promise belongs not to them: but God suffers them to wander in an idle course all their life long, destitute of this blessing, to eat their owne bread. Againe, art thou a rich man, and wouldest continue in that estate, to thine owne comfort, and for the good of those that depend upon thee? then set thy heart to seeke Gods Kingdome with a speciall care, seeke to plant Religion in thy family, and thou and thine house shall flourish. Art thou a student, and desirest the blessing of God upon thy labours, with all things sufficient to thy state and calling? then first seeke Gods Kingdome and righteousnesse, labour for righteousnesse and true holinesse, and God will lade thee with his blessings. In a word, whatsoever thou art, Magistrate, Minister, Merchant, Tradesman, &c. man or woman, young or old, and desirest Gods blessing for thy selfe, or any that belong unto thee, remember the practice of this dutie, and use the lawfull meanes which God lates before thee in thy calling; and nothing doubt, but though all meanes faile, yet God will send sufficient.

How the rich man may continue so.

Temporall blessings are dependants on Gods kingdome.

Secondly, this promise of temporall blessings upon the faithfull seeking of the Kingdome of God, lets us see that food, raiment, and all things needfull for this life, are appurtenances and dependants on Gods Kingdome; that is, such things as over and besides his Kingdome God will give to them that principally seeke his love and favour by the righteousnesse of Christ, and labour for grace and sanctification by his Spirit: for *if he have given us Christ, how shall he not with him give us all things also*, Rom. 8. 32.

Vse. 1 The prepostterous course of worldlings.

The consideration hereof serves for speciall use: I. To discover unto us the prepostterous course that men take in seeking for temporall blessings; for most men generally neglect the maine good, which is Gods Kingdome, and wholly addict themselves to seeke the things of this life: they take little or no thought for the eternall state of their soules, but spend their wit and strength in providing for their bodies: which is nothing else, but to gripe at the shadow, and to let the substance goe. Wherein we shew our selves foolish and simple, like to little children, who are better pleased with the gift of a nut or an apple, than with the promise of rich revenues, or great inheritance. II. This teacheth us with what minde we must seeke the temporall blessings of this life; namely, with the same honest minde where with wee seeke the Kingdome of God, for they are appurtenances thereunto, and depend upon it: and therefore with an upright heart, we must only use lawfull meanes moderately for the getting of them. And when we have them, this may direct us in the right end whereto we must use our temporall blessings; namely, to the furtherance of our selves and others towards the Kingdome of God; so wee *honour God with our riches*, as *Solomon* bids vs, Prov. 3. 9. III. This teacheth us, that they which have no right to Gods Kingdome, nor part in Christs righteousnesse, have no good interest into any temporall blessings; as food, raiment, and such like, for they are dependants upon Gods Kingdome and righteousnesse. As for the heathen before Christs comming, and Turks and Pagans, and all profane persons that live in the Church at this day, who both heretofore, and now also, doe enjoy temporall blessings in great abundance: this wee must know, that they have thereto a civill right by Gods permission, so as it is sinne, without good cause to deprive them thereof; but yet of themselves they are but usurpers, in regard of true title and sanctified use before God: for by *Adams* fall we lost our right and soveraignty in the creatures, and it is onely restored and renued in Christ, so as they which have not part in Christ cannot have this true title. This wee must observe, first, to instruct our selves the better in the knowledge of our owne miserable state by nature; for what wretched creatures are wee, that cannot make good claime nor title before God, to the apparell upon our backes nor to the meat we put into our bellies? nay, of our selves we have not right to the breath we draw in at our nosthrils. And out of question this is the state of every naturall man, though he bee never so great a Monarch in the world, while he is out of Gods Kingdome, wanting righteousnesse and regeneration by Jesus Christ. Secondly, this also must persuade every one of us, to put in practice the former instruction, endevouring above all things to get Gods Kingdome for our selves; for till we have part herein, we can have no sound comfort in the use of Gods creatures, which is necessarily serve to our temporall life. This reason alone, if there were no more, should spur us on to all diligence in this duty: what shame and griefe is it to eat our bread in the sight of God, as theeves and usurpers doe in the sight of men? and therefore let us give no rest unto our

The wicked are usurpers in Gods blessings.

A true title of mans to natural inheritance.

Matth. 6. vers. 34.

soules till wee attaine to some good assurance in this blessed estate. The way we must remember, is by true conversion and regeneration, and we shall discerne our selves to be regenerate by these fruits of the Spirit in us; to wit, I. A true touch of conscience for our sinnes, both originall and actuall. II. A godly sorrow and griefe of heart for offending and displeasing God by our transgressions. III. An earnest desire, or true spirituall hunger and thirst after Christ and his righteousnesse, testified by our constant and diligent use of those meanes the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, wherein God gives grace and assurance of mercy. IV. An unfained running unto God from all sinne by new obedience, having a constant purpose of heart not to sinne, and a godly endeavour in life to please God in all things. These are the markes of the new creature, who hath true title to Gods kingdome; which we must labour to find in our selves for our comfort in the use of Gods creatures: and if we finde them in us, our title is good, not only to his creatures, but to his Kingdome, notwithstanding our owne unworthinesse by our former iniquities.

IV. In this, that temporall blessings are dependants on Gods Kingdome, wee must learne contentation and patience in all temporall losses whatsoever, though wee lose friends, goods, lands, libertie, reputation, or life it selfe, yet we must not bee overwhelmed with sorrow or griefe; for if wee be Gods children, and retaine his favour, the kingdom of heaven remaines sure unto us: while a mans stocke remaines, though some appurtenances bee taken from him, hee counts himselfe well enough; and so must we in all worldly losses, while our title is good to Gods kingdome. Herewithour Saviour Christ comforts his Disciples, Luk. 12. 32. *Feare not little flocke, for it is your Fathers pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* Now if God give us that with his favor in Christ, we may be sure he wold give us all temporall blessings, if he saw them to be good for us; *For if he have given us Christ how shall he not with him give us all things also?*

Thirdly, this promise of Christ, to *give his kingdome to them that seeke it*, and beside, *to cast all temporall blessings unto them*, if they seeke his kingdome principally, doth notably commend unto us the bountifull goodnesse of God: for here we see he gives to his children more than they aske or seeke. And this bountie of God, *Paul* expresseth as a ground of our praying God: Eph. 3. 20. *To him therefore that is able to doe exceeding abundantly above all that we can aske or think, according to the power that worketh in us, be praise in the Church, by Iesus Christ*: where we must observe, that he speaks of Gods ability to be bountifull, as brought into action in his children, so as he is not only able but willing hereunto: and hereof we have daily experience in the blessings of God which we doe enjoy: for when we pray for spirituall graces, God gives them unto us, and many temporall blessings also. This *David* confesseth, Psal. 21. 3. *Thou didds prevent me with the blessings*: and *Salomon* found it to bee true, who asking only *a wise and understanding heart*, received thereupon *riches and honour besides his wisdome*, 1 King. 3. 13. And so did *Iacob*, who *asking onely Gods protection with meat to eat, and Clothes to put on; though he went out but with a staffe, yet returned with two bands.*

Now the consideration of this bounty of God must teach us these duties; First, to *beware of all sinne*, whereby we doe offend and displease our God, who is so gracious and so bountifull unto us: if our outward estate did depend upon others, we would then be carefull so to carrie our selves towards them, as that we would not willingly give them any offence, or cause of dislike; how much more ought wee then to seeke the continuance of Gods favour towards us by all good behaviour, seeing on him depends our whole estate both temporall and eternall? Secondly, *to trust God with our lives, health, bodies, and all we have*, for food, raiment, and protection, in the sober use of lawfull meanes, for he is a bountifull God. Thirdly, to seeke for helpe and succour from God in all distresse and want, for he is bountifull; *he giveth to all men liberally, and reproacheth no man*, Jam. 1. 5. and therefore wee must bee ready and forward to call upon him, and to make our moane unto him. Fourthly, to love so bountifull a God, yea, to enforce our hearts to all duties of love towards him: *Salomon* saith, *Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts*, Prov. 19. 6. but none is to bee compared to God for the riches of bounty; and therefore our love to him should abound. Fifthly, to bee thankfull unto God for all the good things wee enjoy; for whatsoever we have comes from his bountie: and therefore wee must say with *David*, *What shall I give unto the Lord, for all his blessings towards me?* Psal. 116. 12, 13. In a word, we must labour continually in heart and life, to walke worthy of the Lord, and to please him in all things, being *fruitfull in all good workes* (as the Apostle saith,) Colos. 1. 10.

A temporall blessings are dependants on Gods Kingdome.

B

C

D

V. 34. *Care not for the morrow, for the morrow shall care for it selfe: the day hath enough with his owne griefe.*

Here Christ the third time repeats his commandement against distrustfull care, propounded first in the 25. verse; In which often repetition, he intends to make us more carefull and diligent, both to learne and practise the same. And hereto he also addeth a seventh reason to enforce and further our obedience, drawne from the daily griefe and trouble which accompanies every day of our life.

The Exposition. Care not for the morrow: that is, for the time to come. This may seeme a strange commandement, tending to patronage sloth and negligence, but wee must know, that there is a double care for the time to come. I. A godly lawfull care. II. A distrustfull and inordinate care. The godly care is that, whereby a man provides for in the time present, such things as are needfull in the time to come, and cannot then be provided: this lawfull care wee may observe in our *Saviour Christ*; for he had a bag to keepe provision for himselfe and his Disciples, which *Iudas* bare, John 12. 29. and when *Agabus* foretold of a generall famine, *the Disciples provided aforehand*, to send succour to the brethren which dwelt in Judea, Act. 11. 28, 29. And thus may a tradesman provide for maintenance while his strength and sight is good against the time of his age, wherein hee may be unable to follow his calling. And thus doe men in fit season provide for food and raiment. And we may provide to day, that is, in the time present for any needfull thing, when to morrow will not afford it.

A double providence in man. 1 Godly.

2 Inordinate providence.

The inordinate and distrustfull care for the morrow, is that whereby men vex their minds, and turmoile themselves, to provide aforehand for such things as may well enough bee had in the time to come: this *parti anguents asunder the minde*, as the word signifies: and this our Saviour Christ forbids. It is indeed the common care of the world, and we may observe the practice of it thee waies especially: I. When men provide so much worldly goods for themselves, as would serve for many families, or for many generations: there be many such gathergoods, which scrape together as though they should never die, and they scarce know any end of their wealth. This practice our Saviour Christ here forbids. If any in a land might seeke for superfluities, it is the King, whom bountie at all times well beseemeth, and yet God *forbad the King over his owne people, to multiply overmuch his horses and furniture, his silver and his gold*, Deut. 17. 16, 17. II. When men seeke to prevent all losses and casualties, and so plot for themselves, that how soever it goe with others, yet they shall feele no want: though others starve and goe naked, they shall bee full, and well clothed. III. When men provide for to day and to morrow together afore-hand, when as the morrowes provision may sufficiently, safely, and soone enough be made on it owne owne day: This Christ doth chiefly aime at, as crossing the practice of faith, whereby wee should depend upon his providence.

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For the morrow shall care for it selfe; the day hath enough with his owne griefe.

These words containe Christs seventh reason against distrustfull care; the effect whereof is this, every day of mans life hath care enough and griefe sufficient, through the businesse that falls out thereon and belongs unto it, and therefore we care not to adde thereunto another daies care and griefe, for so wee should bring upon our selves more care and griefe than needs.

Seventh reason against distrustfull care.

The morrow, that is the time to come, *shall care for it selfe*. Here Christ answers a question which might bee made from the former commandement; for having forbidden care for the morrow, some might say, How shall we doe on the morrow, and the time to come? Christ answers, This daies care must be to day, and to morrowes care to morrow, each day must have his owne care: such care as is fit and needfull for the time present must now be taken, and such things as are now needfull must now be sought for: but such care as is fit to bee taken in the time to come, must bee put off to his proper time; and things then needfull must then bee sought for, when their fit time falleth out: every time and every day must have his proper care alone.

In this reason we have a most notable rule for the well ordering of our lives: to wit, *that every man must know the duties of his lawfull calling, and how the discharge thereof will yeeld him things necessary and convenient from time to time, and so accordingly must walke therein; that is, doing onely such duties diligently as the present time requireth at his hands, for the procuring of things then meet and needfull: and so proceeding by dependance on Gods providence, in such care and labour as is fitting for the present occasion, time, and season: but for time to come leave on Gods providence respiting the care thereof till God require it at thy hands*: The practice hereof *Samuel* injoyneth *Saul*, 1 Sam. 10. 7. *when these signes (which he shewed him) are fulfilled, thee in the kingdome) shall come unto thee, doe as occasion shall serve*; that is, doe the present duties of a King, that lie before thee, without troubling and vexing thy selfe through feare or care of things to come, till God offer them to thy hand. And this should bee every mans practice in his calling: and so should their present diligence testifie their obedience, and seeve them from presumption, and their respiting of future care till time require it, argue their faith in Gods providence: and thus they should neither foolishly feed upon uncertaine hopes, nor needlessly vex themselves with unfitely cares.

A rule for our life.

The day hath enough with his owne griefe: that is, every day by reason of mans sinnes, hath trouble and griefe enough, through that care & labour for provision which God thereon requireth at our hands: and therefore we should let every day content it selfe with his owne care, and not adde thereto another daies griefe.

In this branch of the reason, Christ sets out the continued miserie of mans naturall life; *Iacob* said to *Pharaoh*, *The dayes of my pilgrimage have beene few and evill*, Genes. 47. 9. And *Iob* saith, *Man that is borne of a woman is of short continuance, & full of trouble*, Job 14. 1. But

The continued miserie of mans life.

But our Saviour Christ here goes beyond them both, saying, *Every day of mans life hath grefe enough of his owne*. This being well considered, may teach us these things: I. To walke in our callings soberly, without intangling our selves in worldly cares; for the daily discharge of the duties of our callings, will bring sorrow and griefe enough upon us, wee need not to adde thereto by our carking care; for the more we care, the more miserable is our life. II. To labour to withdraw our hearts, and to estrange our affections from delight in things of this naturall life, or in this life it selfe; for it is full of griefe; and therefore we must so walke in our callings, that we may wait for a better life in Heaven, where we shall have freedome from all sorrow and griefe. The good Prophet *Elijah* was *weary of his life*, by reason of the miseries of it, through the calamities of the time; and therefore intreateth the Lord to *take away his soule*, 1 King. 19. 4. And *Paul* cries out, one while upon the miseries that hee felt through the bodie of death that was in him, Rom. 7. 24. and at another time desires to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, Phil. 1. 23. not simply, but because there was freedome from all sinne, and the miseries thereof. III. Every day to commend our selves in soules and bodies, and all that wee have, morning and evening, to the

A blessing and protection of God; for each day and night hath griefe enough, by reason of our sinne, which of our selves we cannot undergoe without the helpe of God, when our Saviour Christ was to die upon the crosse, hee *commended his soule into his fathers hands*, Luk. 23. 46. And none of us have assurance of our continuance in life, but though we be well in the morning, we may be dead in the evening; or alive at night, and dead in the morning; and therefore we must not forget the practice of this duty: *David* did it in the time of trouble, though he were in health, Psal. 31. 5. and though wee were free from peril of death, yet our daily vexations should move us hereunto; for who can learne any good thing without labour and paine? who can doe a good worke without let or opposition? If we would *repent*, we are either clogged with corruptions, or overwhelmed with temptations: and if we seeke to *walke in new obedience*, we have the world, the flesh, and the devill, all endevouring to turne us backe to our old course in sinne. So that if we would either avoid evill, or doe good, or support with some comfort our daily vexations, we must commend our selves, and all ours, into the hands of God every day. And thus much of this reason, and of Christs dehortation from distrustfull care.

B

CHAP. 7.

V. 1 *Judge not, that you be not judged.*

2 *For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall bee measured to you againe.*

IN these words, and so forward to the end of the fifth verse, is contained the sixth part of this Sermon of our Saviour Christ, concerning *Judgement*: and it consisteth of three parts; first, a *commandement*, *Iudgeno*: then certaine *reasons* of the commandement, in the words following, to the fifth verse: and thirdly, a *remedy* of evill and rash judgement in the fifth verse.

Touching the commandement, *Iudge not*. *The meaning*. This commandement forbids not all kind of judgement, but must be restained to unlawfull judgement; for there be foure kinds of lawfull judgement, two whereof bee publike, and two private. Of publike, the first is *civill Iudgement*, belonging to the Magistrate, who is to inquire into the manners of

C men, and according to the positive lawes of the countrie to give judgement, either in punishing offenders, or rewarding them that doe well. The second kinde is *Ecclesiasticall*, belonging principally to the minister, who in the publike dispensation of the word, *judgeth* mens manners, by reproving and condemning their sinnes, whether they be thoughts, words, or actions. In this sense the *unbeleever* is said *to bee judged*, when his thoughts and actions are controlled by the word, 1 Cor. 14. 24. and thus *Noah judged and condemned the old world*, Hebr. 11. 7. Of private lawfull judgement, the first is *private admonition*, whereby one man doth in Christian and loving manner, reprehend another for his sinnes, and thereby judgeth him: this is also commanded in the word of God, and therefore it is not here forbidden. The second is just dispraise, when the grosse

grosse faults of notorious persons are reproved and condemned for this end alone, that others may take warning thereby: thus Christ judged the Pharises both for life and doctrine before his Disciples, calling them *Hypocrites*, *that said, and did not*: and their doctrine *leaven*: and that most justly and wisely, that his Disciples and others might beware of them: and thus he called *Herod a Fox*, so discovering his subtilty, for the admonition of others.

Mat. 23. 1. 2. 3. Mat. 16. 6.

The thing then here forbidden is *rash judgement*, which one man doth unjustly give of an other; and the reason why wee so understand this place, may be drawne from the third verse, where instance is given of the judgement here forbidden, in a quicke espiall and sharpe censure of small faults in others, not seeing farre grosser and greater in our selves: also S. *Luke* setting downe this prohibition, *Iudge not*, expounds it in the next words, by *condemne not*: which must be understood of rash censure, as is plaine by S. *Paul*, Rom. 2. 1. *In that thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe*, because thou dost rashly condemne him of that where of thou thy selfe art guilty. Now that we may better know the thing forbidden, first I will shew what *rash judgement* is, and in the second place make knowne the common *practices* thereof. For the first:

Luk. 6 37.

Rash judgement described.

Rash judgement is, when of an evill mind we judge amisse of others, for some evill end. In this description, first observe the root and ground of all rash judgement; to wit, *an evill minde*, whereby we love our selves too well, and want the love of our neighbour. This we testifie, by being sharpe sighted, to pry into the lives and behaviour of others, and are as blind as beetles to see into our selves: as also by giving our selves exactly to censure other mens sayings and doings, and with delight to heare their faults ripped up; but for our owne courses, we would not have them called into question, nor controlled. Secondly, here note the manner of rash judgement, which is *to judge amisse of others*: and this they doe which judge of other mens persons and doings without a calling, or urgent necessitie: secondly, which give out sentence of mens doings, but not according to the law of charity, which binds a man to judge and say the best of others alwaies, so farre forth as may stand with good conscience, and the word of God. Thirdly, here note the *end* of rash judgement; for as it is ill grounded and guided, so it aimes not at the reformation of the partie, nor the detestation of sinne in our selves and others, but it is directed to some wrong end: as first, to testifie the hatred of the partie, and desire of revenge: secondly, to delight our selves with the faults of others: thirdly, to defame our neighbors, and to bring them to an ill name, that our names may beare away the praise without comparison: and lastly, that we may seeme more holy than others, by being much in censuring sinne in others.

A

The practice of rash judgement consists in two things: first, the evill mind of man prepares matter of wrong judgement: and secondly, gives sentence accordingly of the sayings and doings of men, and likewise of their persons. For the first, the evill minde prepares matter of rash judgement thus; it sets it selfe to pry and inquire narrowly into the lives and behaviour of men, and to see if it can finde any matter in word or action worthy reproofe. Indeed there is a vertue whereby one man doth observe another in his waies, but that is directed to a good end; namely, to rectifie and reforme him in his wants, and to further him when he doth well: but for one man to observe another for this end, to finde out matter of defamation and reproach, is a fault directly forbidden by our Saviour Christ in this place. Secondly, when matter is found, the evill minde accordingly gives censure: this censure is given, first, of the persons of men; then of their speeches and actions. Rash censure of *mens persons* is, when a man thinkes otherwise of the person of another, than in conscience, and by Gods word he ought to doe. Example of this wee have in Satan: for when the Lord commended *Iob* for his fidelitie, Satan tells the Lord, that *Iob* indeed served the Lord, but it was onely for his owne profit: for (saith he) *withdraw thou thy hand from him, and thou shalt see, whether hee will not curse thee to thy face*: This then we see is a devilish practice, and ought to be far from every one of us. We must remember what an ancient Divine hath taught heretofore, that there are three things exempted from the judgement and censure of men; the *Scriptures*, the *Counsell of God*, and *the condemnation of any mans person*.

B

B. ff. censure of mens persons.

Iob 1. 8, 9, 10, 11.

C

August. l. 10. confess. c. 23.

Rash censure of mens behaviours.

Rash censure of mens speeches and actions is given many waies: I. When things are well done, to carpe and cavill at them without any just cause. Thus the profession of Religion at this day, is accounted of many to be but counterfeit holinesse, and the due obedience to the morall Law is nick-named and termed precisenesse, and the professours thereof called Puritans and Precisians, for this cause onely, that they make conscience of walking in obedience to Gods Law. II. When actions or speeches indifferent, are taken in the worser part. Thus was *Davids kindnesse* ill accepted of *Hanun* King of Ammon, when *David* sent his servants to comfort him after the death of his father: for his Nobles told him and perswaded him, that *David* sent not unto him, because he honoured his father, (though *David* undoubtedly sent with an honest and upright heart, but as it were craftily to search out the City, and to spie it out, and to overthrow it. Now hereupon *Davids* servants were badly intreated, and shamefully sent away: whence grew the warre that ensued betweene them. III. When upon light occasion and uncertaine reports, we suspect and surmise evill of our neighbour: suspitions indeed

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1 Sam 10. 3, 4.

deed are ſometime good, being conceived on a good ground, and retained for a good end; as to beware of the partie and of his evill: but when they are conceived upon light cauſes, and for ſomeiniſter reſpect (as the common practice is, upon no good ground to conceive moſt badly) this is raſh judgement. IV. When wee ſee any want in our neighbours ſpeech or behaviour, to make it worſe than it was meant, or than indeed it is. V. When wee ſpread abroad and publiſh the wants of men, to defame them, which might better bee concealed, and in conſcience and charity ought ſo to bee. VI. When wee ſpeake nothing but the truth of another, but yet withall doe inſinuate thereby ſome evill of the partie into the hearts of the hearers. This practice is as peſtilent and dangerous as any of the former. Thus *Doeg* told *Saul* of the fact of *Ahimelech* unto *David*, how *he gave him victuals, & the ſword of Goliah*, which was true: but withall he did therein inſinuate, that *David* and *Ahimelech* intended conſpiracy againſt *Saul*. And this telling of the truth in that ſort, coſt the lives of *fourescore and five perſons, that wore the linen Ephod*, as we may reade, 1 Sam. 21. 7. compared with the 22. chap. v. 9, and 18. VII. When in hearing the Word preached, and ſins reproved in the congregation, ſome hearers miſ-apply the ſame: as for example, the Miniſter reproves the ſinn eof ſwearing, of drunkenneſſe, or any ſuch ſinne: then ſome one guilty hereof, doth not only ſurmiſe, but alſo breake forth into this ſpeech, *Now the preacher meanes me: he ſpeakes this of me: he cenſures my facts and ſpeeches*; hereupon followes ſpight and malice againſt the perſon of the Miniſter, and alſo raſh cenſuring and condemning of his miniſterie. They alſo ſinne in this kinde, that apply the reproofes of ſinne to the perſon of others: as when they ſay, *Now ſuch a one is touched: there is a good leſſon for ſuch a one if he would learne it*: yea, others go further, and ſay, *Now the preacher meanes ſuch a man: now he ſpeakes againſt ſuch a man*: but this alſo is raſh judgement in hearing of the Word: they miſ-conceive of the purpoſe of the Miniſter: for his manner is not when hee ſtandeth in the roome of God, to rip up the ſecrets and lives of ſome particular hearers; but to deliver the will of God concerning ſuch and ſuch ſinnes unto all: it is the power of the Word, not the minde of the Preacher, that cauſeth it to touch thy conſcience: and therefore every one ought to apply the Word unto his owne heart, and not to lay it upon others, or elſe take it to be ſpoken of himſelfe for his diſgrace: for it is to miſ-apply the Word, and to judge amiſſe of the Preacher: and this is a common ſinne, which is the cauſe why many men reape ſo little profit by the Word preached as they doe. The VIII. practice of raſh judgement is, when in townes and cities ſome perſons are wrongfully reputed and taken for Witches: this is as common a ſinne

A thorowout the world as any of the former: one man will ſay, *Such a one is a Witch, becauſe he in conſcience* is ſo perſwaded; and yet the ground of this perſwaſion is nothing but his bare conceit. Another man ſaith, *Such a one is a Witch, becauſe a wiſe man or a wiſe woman hath ſo reported of him or her*: and yet this teſtimonie is but the teſtimonie of the Devill, *who is a lyar, and the father thereof*: if hee tell truth, it is with purpoſe to deceive. Againe, another is judged to be a Witch, *becauſe comming to a mans houſe to borrow ſomething, and being denied thereof, he tooke it unkindly, and thereupon gave theſe, or ſuch like threatning words; It had bin as good you had lent it mee*; or, *I will meet with you*: and hereupon ſome one in the family fell ſicke, or ſome cattell died, and other things did miſ-carry. It is no queſtion, but Witches be too riſe among us, and ought to bee ſought out and ſeverely puniſhed; and there bee lawfull waies of convincing a Witch: but upon theſe bare preſumptions to judge any one to bee a Witch, is an unchriſtian practice of raſh judgement: for why may not the hand of God befall thee in viſiting ſome one in thy family, or in the death of thy cattell, as well as the annoyance of the Witch, after ſome hard ſpeeches of another. A Witch therefore muſt firſt be lawfully convinced, and then judged to be a Witch, and not before. Thus thiug eſpecially Jurers ought to looke unto; elſe if they have but the ordinary diſcretion of common people, to judge one for a Witch upon theſe preſumptions, they may eaſily deſile their hands with innocent bloud. Thus much for the ſinne of raſh judgement, and the practices thereof, which are condemned and forbidden in this place.

Now becauſe it is ſo common a ſinne in all places, and with moſt men counted no ſin: for the common talke in all meetings is of other men, and ſelfe-love makes the heart glad to heare other mens faults ripped up, yea, this ſinne will take hold when other ſinnes leave a man, which cauſed Chriſt to forwarne his Diſciples hereof in this place: therefore it is our dutie to labour and ſtrive the more earneſtly to be purged from this evill minde: and preſerved from theſe evill practices of raſh judgement: for which end let us lay to our conſciences the reaſons following: I. The practice of raſh Judgment cannot ſtand with Chriſtian charity: for charity binds a man to walke in love, and *love ſuſpecteth not evill*, but thinkes the beſt alwaies, and if it be poſſible, thinks well of all. II. When thou ſeeſt a man ſpeake or practiſe any evill, for which thou beginneſt to thinke hardly of him, then conſider well of thine owne ſelfe, how thou haſt both that and all other ſinnes in thee, if wee regard the root of ſinne, and therefore doe not raſhly condemne him for his fact, becauſe thou thy ſelfe haſt done the like heretofore; or elſe in time to come maiſt do the like or worſe than hee hath done whom thou now condemneſt. III. Conſider that God the

Reaſons againſt raſh judgement. I

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Duties to be obſerved when we ſpeake of others. I

the Father hath committed all judgement unto his Sonne: who now executeth publike judgement by the magiſtrate in the common-wealth, and by the Miniſter in the Church; and private judgement of admonition, and juſt diſpraiſe, by them whom he calleth thereunto: if therefore thou judgeſt another, not being called thereto, thou thruſteſt Chriſt out of his office, and robbeſt him of his honour, which is a grievous ſinne, and cannot be unpuniſhed. IV. Conſider alſo that thou art unable, whatſoever thou art, to judge aright of other mens actions, being ignorant of many circumſtances thereof: for thou knoweſt not with what minde, or to what end the action was done: thou knoweſt not the cauſe why he did it, nor the ſtate of his perſon, nor manner of his temptation thereto: and therefore why judgeſt thou raſhly of him? V. He that gives raſh judgement of another, is worſe than a theefe that ſteales away a mans goods: for hee robs him of his *good name*, which (as *Salomon* ſaith) *Is to be choſen above great riches*, Prov. 22. 1. Againe, riches may be reſtored, ſo cannot a mans good name, being once blemiſhed in the hearts of many. Againe, a man may defend himſelfe from a theefe, but no man can ſhunne another mans evill minde, or his bad tongue: nay, the backbiter is worſe than a murtherer, for he killeth three at once; firſt, his *owne ſoule* in thus ſinning: ſecondly, his *neighbour* whoſe name he hurteth: and thirdly, the hearer, who receiveth this raſh and unjuſt report: and for this cauſe the *ſlanderer* is numbred among thoſe that ſhall not inherit the kingdome of God, Pſal. 15. 3. 1 Cor. 6. 10. and the Apoſtle chargeth Chriſtians to account of ſuch raylers as of perſons excommunicate, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

Here ſome will ſay; If we may not give our opinion of others freely as we have done; what muſt we doe when we have occaſion to ſpeake of them? *Anſw.* Thy carriage towards others muſt bee according to theſe rules: I. If thou know any good thing by the partie of whom thou ſpeakeſt, when thou haſt occaſion thinke and ſpeake of that: if thou know evill by him alſo, conceale it from others; and if thou maiſt, admoniſh the party thereof: or elſe tell it to thoſe who have authority to correct his faults; and thus ſhalt thou win thy brother. Some will ſay, I doe indeed ſometime cenſure my brother for his faults, yet onely in deteſtation of his ſinne; I love the party never the worſe; and I onely doe it to ſome private friend that will not tell it againe. *Anſ.* But this excuſe, and all ſuch like are frivolous: no colour of good intent can excuſe raſh judgement: if thou loveſt him, why doeſt thou make knowne his fault to another, *for love covereth a multitude of ſinnes?* And if thy conſcience anſwer, it will tell thee that either ill will to the partie cauſeth thee ſo to doe, or ſelfe-love, whereby through his defamation thou thy ſelfe ſeekeſt to be advanced above him in the thoughts of others. In thy

A cenſuring therefore looke to thine heart, whether malice move thee not the to: and take heed to the end alſo; for if it riſe from a bad ground, or tend to a wrong end, the whole action is naught. II. *Dutie.* Wee ought to thinke as well of every man as poſſibly we can, yea, of our enemie and of his actions: for *love thinketh not evill*; and in the practice of love towards our enemies we become followers of God, Matth. 5. 44, 45. III. *Dutie.* If thou marke thy neighbours life and behaviour, doe it for this end, to withdraw him from ſinne, and to further him in well-doing. Laſtly, in all thy ſocieties and dealings with others, labour either to doe them good, or to receive good from them: and by this meanes thou ſhalt eſchew the ſinne of raſh judgement.

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B Here two queſtions may bee moved concerning raſh judgement, and that neceſſarily, becauſe ſurmiſes will ariſe upon very ſmall occaſions.

Of ſuſpecting evill of others.

I. Queſt. When may a man doubt or ſuſpect evill of another? *Anſ.* In all ſuſpition recourſe muſt bee had to the ground thereof, whether it riſe of juſt and ſufficient cauſe or not. A ſufficient cauſe of ſuſpition is that, which in the judgement of wiſe men, being well conſidered with all the circumſtances thereof, is judged ſufficient: and on the other ſide, that is inſufficient, which wiſe men wel weighing with the circumſtances thereof, doe judge inſufficient: if then the cauſe of ſuſpition bee thought inſufficient in the judgement of the wiſe and godly, we muſt ſuſpend our ſuſpition: as thus; ſuppoſe ſome evill is reported abroad of ſuch a man; as that he is a theefe, an adulterer, of ſuch like; yet this fame riſeth only of ſome one mans report, which becauſe it may proceed from an ill minde on a private grudge, we are not to yeeld thereupon to ſuſpect ill of the partie: this report may well cauſe us to ſearch further into the caſe, and move us to looke unto our ſelves that we be not hurt by him. But if the cauſe be thought ſufficient in the judgement of thoſe that are wiſe and diſcreet, then we may without offence or breach of conſcience, yeeld to ſuſpect and judge evill of another.

C

How to judge of others rightly.

D *II. Queſtion.* How may wee give upright judgement of all men with whom we live and have to deale? *Anſ.* This is as neceſſarie to bee knowne as the former, for as wee are prone to thinke ill, ſo wee are alſo forward in judging raſhly: therefore there are three things required in the judging of others: Firſt, we muſt have recourſe to the cauſe of our judgement: for if the cauſe bee inſufficient, then our judgement is raſh and unlawfull. Before the Lord brought upon the world the confuſion of languages; he is ſaid to *goe down among them to ſee their fact*, Gen. 11. 6. and before hee deſtroyed Sodome and Gomorrah with fire and brimſtone, hee is ſaid *to come downe from Heaven, to ſee whether they had done according to the cry that was come up to the Lord*, Gen. 18. 21. whereby the Lord would

1 Rule.

would teach us, that before he enter into judgement with any man, or any people, he firſt takes good conſideration of the fact, which cauſeth his puniſhment.

Secondly, we muſt have authority and warrant by calling to give judgement, or elſe ſome thing which is anſwerable thereto, though the judgement be private: as to give admonition or juſt diſpraiſe; yet without a calling we muſt not do it: hee that giveth judgement muſt bee able truly to ſay, *The Lord hath called me thus to doe.* The Magiſtrate, the Miniſter, the Maſter, and every Superiour hath authority to judge thoſe that are under him: and for private men in private judgement, though they want this authoritie by calling, yet if they have that which is anſwerable hereto, that is, the affection of Chriſtian love; ſo as they can ſay with *Paul, The love of God conſtraineth mee,* then they may judge.

Thirdly, we muſt alwaies have a *good end* of our judgement, as well as a good beginning: that is, the reformation and amendment, not the defaming of our brother. And theſe three concurring in all hard ſpeeches, they ceaſe to be raſh and unjuſt cenſures. *Iohn Baptiſt* calls the *Phariſees and Sadducees, a generation of vipers,* Matth. 3. 7. our *Saviour Chriſt* calls them a *hypocrites, and painted tombes*: and b *Herod a Fox*: the Prophet *Iſai* calls the Princes and people of Iuda and Iſrael, c *Princes and people of Sodome*: and the Apoſtle calls the Galatians, *Fooles,* Gal. 3. 1. and the Cretians, *Liars, evill beaſts, ſlow bellies,* Tit. 1. 12, 13. All which are hard ſpeeches, but yet no ſlanders; becauſe they had all of them a calling ſo to doe: and likewiſe did this on good ground, and for a good end.

Thus much for the commandement. Now follow two reaſons to induce us to make conſcience of raſh judgement. The former is laid downe in theſe words: *That ye be not judged.* And it may be framed thus:

If ye judge, ye ſhall bee judged of men againe with raſh judgement:

But ye cannot abide to bee judged of raſhly: and therefore judge not.

The *ſecond part* is underſtood, but yet neceſſarily collected. The *concluſion* is the commandement it ſelfe, *Iudge not.*

This reaſon doth afford unto us two inſtructions. I. It giveth us a taſte and view of our owne naturall pride and ſelfe-love: for when wee heare God diſhonoured by ſwearing, or our neighbours name defamed by ſlandering, we are not only not grieved, but oftentimes are the cauſe thereof, and take great delight therein, eſpecially in hearing other mens faults ripped up to their diſgrace: but yet wee can in no ſort brooke or ſuffer our owne good name to be called in queſtion: if our ſelves be evill ſpoken of, we are preſently filled with malice and envy, and cannot be at reſt till we bee requited or revenged: may, though we be in a good manner admoniſhed of our fault, even in love, and after a friendly ſort, yet wee can very hardly brooke it; though the partie admoniſhing make knowne unto us, that he doth it only for our good, without all purpoſe of diſgrace unto our perſons.

A

B

II. *Inſtruct.* Here alſo our Saviour Chriſt affordeth unto us a notable way whereby wee may come to the knowledge of our owne ſins, and of the hainouſneſſe thereof. When we behold ſinne in our ſelves, wee hardly judge it to be ſinne: we muſt therefore looke upon our owne ſinnes in the perſon of others, and learne to judge of it in our ſelves as wee judge of it in others. When we conſider of raſh judgement in others againſt our ſelves, wee count it a vile and grievous ſinne, yea, odious and intolerable: and in like ſort ought wee to thinke of raſh judgement in our ſelves towards others: and ſo for every other ſinne in our ſelves, we ought to judge of it, as we doe when we ſee it in the perſons of others againſt us: otherwiſe if wee looke onely to our ſelves, we ſhall ſooth up our ſelves in ſinne, making great ſinnes little ſinnes, and ſmall ſinnes none at all.

How to know and judge rightly of our owne ſins.

v. 2 *For with what judgement ye judge, ye ſhall bee judged: and with what meaſure you mete, it ſhall bee meaſured to you againe.*

C

This verſe containes a double confirmation of the former reaſon, drawne from the event. The firſt, in theſe words, *For with what judgement ye judge, ye ſhall be judged:* as if Chriſt had ſaid; If ye judge men raſhly, then men againe, by the appointment of God in his wiſdome and providence, ſhall accordingly give raſh judgement upon you: but if yee judge men righteouſly, then men againe, by Gods appointment and providence, ſhall judge well of you: for ſo I take the words to bee meant of mens judgement by Gods appointment in his providence, and not of Gods judgement immediatly.

Now in this proofe, Firſt, wee may obſerve one true and maine cauſe of that perſonall defamation which is common in the world, and it is to be found in the perſon himſelfe that is defamed; he hath raſhly and unjuſtly cenſured others, for which God in his providence, doth moſt juſtly cauſe others to defame him againe: ſo as men themſelves doe moſt of all wound their owne good names, and by their bad cariage toward others juſtly cauſe their owne diſgrace. In regard whereof we muſt learne; firſt, to ſet a carefull watch before our mouthes, to keepe the doore of our lips, governing our tongues by the word of God: for when we cenſure others raſhly, wee doe procure judgement unto our ſelves. Secondly, to bee patient under the raſh cenſures and ſlanders of others. For we muſt thinke, that wee our ſelves have heretofore

A maine cauſe of perſonall defamation.

D

Eccliſ.7.13,14.

How to get a good name.

Pſal.34.13.

Eccleſ.10.20.

A

B

C

D

Godly men puniſhed for ſinnes in their Princes.

A caution to all oppreſſors.

Amos 8.5.

totore done the like to others: and therefore it is juſtice with God to reward us in the ſame kinde, wherewith we have wronged others. This is *Salomons* counſell, *Give not thine heart to all the words that men ſpeake, leſt thou doe heare thy ſervant curſing thee: for oftimes a ſo thine heart knoweth that thou likewiſe haſt curſed others.*

Secondly, in this proofe we may alſo obſerve the right way, how to get and keepe a good name: to wit, by judging others with Chriſtian judgement, carrying a charitable opinion of every one, ſpeaking the beſt of them in all companies, ſo farre forth as we can with good conſcience, and never judging hardly of any, till wee bee indeed lawfully called thereunto, having a good ground for our action, and doing it for a good end: *If thou wouldeſt live long* (ſaith the Prophet) *and ſee good dayes, reſraine thy tongue from evill, and thy lips that they ſpeake no guile:* that is, ſpeake not evil of any man, though thou know ill by him, till thou be lawfully called thereto.

Thirdly, from the conſideration of this prouidence of God, whereby he ordereth and diſpoſeth, that defamers of others ſhall be rewarded in their kinde, and that by others; we may gather, that God knowes every unadviſed thought of the heart, and every raſh cenſure which we ſpeake or thinke of others; elſe how could this be true, that raſh judgers ſhall be ſo rewarded in their kinde, ſeeing men may conceale their thoughts, and many times their words from the eyes of men. To this purpoſe *Salomon* admoniſheth, not *to curſe the King, no not in thy thought, nor the rich man in thy bedchamber: for the fowle of heaven ſhall carry the voyce, and that which hath wings ſhall declare the matter.* And this muſt teach us for to make conſcience of all our ſpeeches and thoughts that concerne others, yea, then when wee our ſelves are judged. When *David* was railed upon by wicked *Shimei*, hee ſtayed himſelfe with the conſideration of this, that God *knew it*, and *appointed Shimei to curſe David,* 2 Sam. 16. 10.

Laſtly, here it may bee doubted how God can be cleared from the guilt of raſh judgement, ſeeing in his providence he cauſeth it by his decree. *Anſ.* Though hee decree it, yet is hee free from the fault thereof: for firſt, he decrees it not to be the cauſe thereof himſelfe, but to permit it among men, leaving them to be the authors thereof: ſecondly, hee decrees to diſpoſe of it well, and to order it as a juſt puniſhment of the raſh judgement of others, and ſo in no ſort is the cauſe of the evill in raſh judgement; howſoever he diſpoſe hereof for the juſt puniſhment of offenders in this kinde.

The ſecond confirmation of the firſt reaſon is contained in this parable, which tendeth to the ſame end with the former ſentence: *And with what meaſure you mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you againe:* that is, the Lord hath ordained that men ſhall be rewarded in their kinde, like for like. Hence wee may obſerve this rule of Gods juſtice in the puniſhment of ſinnes: namely, to reward men in their kind, puniſhing them in the ſame things wherein they offend. *David* ſinned by committing adultery with *Bathſheba*, the wife of *Vriah*: and God by way of puniſhment raiſed up evill againſt him out of his own houſe in the ſame kinde: for his owne ſonne *Abſalom*, deflowred his fathers concubines in the ſight of all Iſrael, 2 Sam. 12. 9, 11. and 16. 22. And experience ſheweth, that *blood will have blood*; for though the murtherer eſcape the hands of the civill Iudge, yet he terrour and vengeance of God doth ordinarily purſue him to deſtruction. A notable example hereof wee have in the holy league (as it is called) but indeed the bloudy league; wherein the enemies of Gods grace and truth did confederate themſelves to root out true religion, and the profeſſors thereof from off the earth: but the Lord hath rewarded them in their kinde, and turned their owne ſwords againſt themſelves, cauſing them to ſpoile one another; according to the prophecie of *Iſay, Woe to thee that ſpoyleſt, and was not ſpoyled: and doeſt wickedly, and they did not wickedly againſt thee: when thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoile, thou ſhalt be ſpoyled.* Iſa. 33. 1.

This rewarding juſtice of God well obſerved, doth diſcover unto us, yea, and denounce a fearefull woe, not onely againſt all thoſe that give out raſh judgement of others; but againſt all uſurers and oppreſſors, who mete out hard meaſure unto others, even cruelty without mercy: but ſo ſhall they be ſerved againe. Gods heavy hand hath heretofore lien ſore upon this land for many yeares in dearth and ſcarcity, which alſo in ſome ſort hath beene made more grievous upon the poore, by hard hearted rich men, who are like to great fiſhes that devoure the leſſer: for *they grinde the faces of the poore, and pluckes off their skins from them, and their fleſh from the bones*, by their wicked covetouſneſſe; yea, doubles their cruelty coſts many a mans life. Some in higher place by incloſing, and racking of rents: others of meaner ſort, by ingroſſing and with-holding the commodities of the land from the common good til a time of dearth come, wherein (as the Prophet ſaith) *they make the Epha ſmall, and the Shekel great*; that is, ſell little for much, leſſening the meaſure, and enhancing the price. And indeed, ſuch a time of dearth is the noſtrilling day, wherein they do inrich themſelves by the ſpoile of the poore: but they muſt know that a fearefull woe belongs unto them: for the like mercileſſe meaſure ſhall be meaſured to them againe; and when they ceaſe to ſpoyle, then ſhall they bee ſpoyled: for when the hand of God is heavy upon the poore, then no doubt is vengeance preparing for hard hearted rich men, who increaſe the ſame. The Lord forbiddeth to *trouble the widdow or fatherleſſe childe*: Exod. 22. 22, 23, &c. *for if thou vex and trouble ſuch, and ſo he call and cry unto mee, I will ſurely heare*

his cry: then ſhall my wrath be kindled, and I will kill you with the ſword: and your wives ſhall be widowes, and your children fatherleſſe. This is Gods word, and it muſt ſtand. The Lord himſelfe foretold that towards the latter day, *iniquity ſhould abound, & charity ſhould wax cold:* and are not theſe the times whereof Chriſt ſpake? for what power hath the Goſpell to withdraw mens hearts from iniquity? and when was there ever leſſe charity than is now? well, theſe are fore-runners of greater judgements; and therefore in the feare of God, let us make conſcience of this and all other ſinnes, even in conſideration of this, that the Lord will pay us home in that kinde wherein we offend.

A

V. 3 *And why ſeeſt thou the mote that is in thy brothers eye, & perceiveſt not the beame that is in thine owne eye?*

4. *Or how ſaieſt thou to thy brother, Suffer me to caſt out the mote out of thine eye, and behold a beam is in thine own eie?*

Theſe two verſes containe a ſecond reaſon to inforce the former commandement againſt raſh judgement. The meaning of the words is this: *Why ſeeſt thou*] that is, upon what ground, for what cauſe, with what conſcience *ſeeſt thou.* And ſo in the 4.v. *How ſaieſt thou*] that is, with what face, with what honeſty and conſcience *ſayeſt thou.* So much theſe interrogations *how*, and *why* import. *Seeſt*] ſight, here is not a light or ſudden beholding of the mote, but a ſeeing with attention, a ſerious and conſiderate obſervation thereof. *A mote*] the word uſed in the originall, may as well be tranſlated a *ſtraw*, or *a peece of a ſtraw*, as a *mote*, as it hath beene in former times; for it will beare either tranſlation: yet the word *beame*, ſeemes rather to have reference to a *ſtraw*, than to a *mote*: but which way ſoever it be taken, it ſignifies *ſmall and little ſinnes*, as ſinnes of ignorance and infirmity, ſuch as the beſt Chriſtians doe commit, and cannot be free from in this life. Againe, it ſignifieth *ſuppoſed ſinnes*; ſuch as are not indeed ſins before God, but onely in his opinion that giveth raſh judgement. *And perceiveſt not*] this *perceiving* is properly an action of the minde, ſtanding in *conſideration* and *thinking*, which followes after *ſeeing*. Thus the world is uſed, Luk.12.27. *Conſider the lilies of the field*; that is, looke upon them, and then conſider well thereof in your minde. And, Jam.1.23. *He that heares the Word, and doth it not, is like unto a man that* BEHOLDS *his naturall face in a glaſſe:* that is, to one that ſees and conſiders of his ſhape. So that Chriſts meaning is, as if hee had ſaid, It may be thou ſeeſt, but why doeſt thou

B

not well weigh and conſider with thy ſelfe of the beame that is in thine owne eye? By *beame*, is here meant *great and notorious reigning ſins* in mans heart; ſuch as wound the conſcience, which are like unto a beame in the eye: which doth not onely blemiſh, but quite daſh out the ſight. Some may here aske, in what ſenſe this is ſpoken, ſeeing the eye is not capable of a beame? *Anſ.* It is ſpoken by way of ſuppoſition, as if it had bin ſaid; If it were poſſible that a beame could be in the eye, the raſh cenſurers fault is as a *beame in the eye*: this kind of ſpeech is uſuall in Scripture; *If I could ſpeake with tongues of Angels*, ſaith S. *Paul*, 1 Cor.13.1. that is, ſuppoſe Angels had tongues, and that I could ſpeake as eloquently as they. The words of the 4. verſ. are for ſubſtance all one with the former in the 3. The difference betweene them is only this; in the 3.v. Chriſt ſpeaks only of *raſh judgement conceived in the mind*; but in the 4. he ſpeakes of *raſh judgement uttered in ſpeech*: *How ſaieſt thou to thy brother, &c.* So that in both verſes the words are a parable bearing this ſenſe; with what face, honeſty, or conſcience, canſt thou finde fault with thy brother, either in thought or ſpeech, thou thy ſelfe being tainted with greater faults and offences? And hence the ſecond reaſon may bee thus conceived:

He that hath greater faults, muſt not cenſure him that hath leſſer:

But he that gives raſh judgement, hath greater faults than he whom he cenſures: And therefore no man ought to uſe raſh judgement.

C

The propoſition or firſt part is omitted: the Aſſumption expreſly ſet downe in the 3. and 4. v. whereupon the concluſion followes againſt raſh judgement.

Upon this forme of ſpeech, *How ſeeſt thou? why ſaieſt thou?* that is, with what face and honeſty, and upon what ground? we may learne this inſtruction; that our ſpeeches, yea, our very thoughts muſt be conceived and uttered upon good ground, and in a good manner. *Eſtabliſh thy thought by counſell*, (ſaith *Salomon*) *and by counſell make war*: teaching us to haue direction from the word of God, for the ground and manner of our very thoughts, and for all our affaires. Our Saviour Chriſt bids us *take heed how we heare Gods word*: and *Salomon* would draw us to this heed and attention in prayer alſo; *Be not raſh with thy mouth, nor let thy heart be haſty to utter a thing before God*: now that which they ſpeake of divine exerciſes, is in this place by our Saviour inlarged to every thought of the heart, and word of the mouth, that concernes our brother.

D

Further, in theſe words, *Seeſt thou*; that is, with attention and conſideration beholdeſt] our Saviour Chriſt acquaints us with a common fault wherewith our nature is generally ſtained and corrupted: to wit, that we are *over-ſharpe ſighted in other mens lives and offences*: this appeares in that men can eaſily diſcerne ſmall faults

Matth.7. verſ.3.4.

Our words and thoughts muſt have good ground.

Pro.20.18.

Talk.8.12.

Eccleſ.5.1.

Man is curious prying into the faults of others.

Matth.7. verſ.3.4.

faults in others, and cannot ſee great offences in themſelves, nay, when they can finde no juſt fault, yet they will make thoſe faults which indeed be none at all. Example hereof we have in the Scribes and Phariſies, in their cenſures againſt our Savior and his Diſciples: they themſelves were hypocrites tainted with grievous ſinnes, and yet they pried to finde motes in Chriſts eyes: for when he wrought miracles, cured the diſeaſed, and did good unto all, they blamed him as a breaker of the Sabbath day, and as a companion of Publicans and ſinners, though he converſed with them for their good: ſo they blamed his Diſciples for eating with unwaſhen hands, and for plucking up the eares of corne on the Sabbath day, to ſatiſfie their hunger; and for their ſeldome faſting. This fault was in the Corinthians, who cenſured *Paul* and his miniſtery: for want of eloquence and excellency of words, which was in other Teachers among them, as may appeare by his rebuking of them, 1 Cor.4. And the Chriſtian brethren among the Romans condemned one another in the obſervation of dayes and times, and in the uſe of the creatures of God, Rom.14. which was nothing elſe but raſh judgement. And this no doubt is a fault which reigneth in our congregations, even among the beſter ſort at this day; for deeply is our nature ſtained with this corruption, and ſo prone it is to this ſinne, that even they which have received true grace, can hardly abſtaine from the practices of raſh judgement.

A

The conſideration hereof muſt teach us theſe duties: Firſt, to take knowledge of this corruption of our nature, and of the want of brotherly love in us; for why ſhould we ſo ſoone ſpie a fault in another, but becauſe we want love and charity to his perſon? Wee may conſider the vileneſſe of this practice by reſemblance in ſome bruit creatures: for we account moſt baſely of thoſe ravening fowles which delight in nothing but in filthy carrions; and ſuch for all the world are theſe raſh cenſurers, all their delight is in other mens faults, which makes them ſo ſharpe ſighted to ſpie them out.

B

Secondly, when we are about to cenſure any man, we muſt (in regard of this corruption) ſuſpect our ſelves, and our ſpeeches, and call our ſelves backe to a view and conſideration of that which we are to ſpeake; for oft-times we ſee that which we ought not to ſee, and thereupon ſpeake that which wee ought in conſience to conceale. Phyſicians give this note of a phrenſie, *to begin to take up ſtrawes*: now when the minde lookes not into it ſelfe, but pries into other mens actions, then no doubt it is not right, but is corrupt and infected with a ſpirit of all phrenſie, and therefore the danger of this diſeaſe muſt cauſe us to looke unto our ſelves.

C

Thirdly, here wee may obſerve a reaſon of the ſtrange behaviour of men in regard of ſinne: for this we may eaſily perceive, that men will open mouth will condemne thoſe things in others, which they like and approve in themſelves: now the cauſe hereof is, for that the affections doe follow the minde; ſuch as the mind is, ſuch are the affections: and mans mind naturally looketh outward, not inward, it ſees very little faults in others, but will neither ſee nor condemne the ſame faults, nor greater in it ſelfe: nay, rather it cauſeth man to love thoſe ſinnes in himſelfe, which he deteſts in others. And therefore in the amendment of our lives, wee muſt begin in our owne hearts, and turne the eye of our minde inward, to ſee our owne ſinnes, and labour firſt to have our hearts touched with ſorrow for them, and to hate them firſt in our ſelves, and then to proceed to hate them in others. It is a prepoſterous courſe, ariſing from the corruption of Nature, to begin with the hatred and diſlike of ſinne out of our ſelves.

D

II. Doctrine. Further, here in this reaſon our Saviour Chriſt makes a difference of ſinnes: ſome are as motes, ſome as beames: every ſinne indeed is death and condemnation, and yet all are not equall, but farre different in degrees: as ſome men are drowned in the channel and middle of the ſea, ſome by the ſhore ſide, which places differ in depth and danger, though all is one in regard of death: ſome men endure damnation in deeper meaſure, ſome in leſſer, yet both are condemned. But the Papiſts abuſe theſe words, and would gather hereon a diſtinction of ſinnes which God doth not allow; to wit, that ſome ſins are *venial*, which deſerve not death, and theſe are here called *motes*: ſome againe are *mortall*, deſerving death, and thoſe are called *beames*. But the *mote* and *beame* are both mortall ſins. A *mote* or a *ſtraw* may ſometime put out the eye, though indeed the *beame* be more forcible to daſh it quite out: and ſo doe ſmall ſinnes wound the conſcience, and damne the ſoule, though greater ſinnes doe more deeply wound the conſcience, and plunge the ſame into hell: ſmall and great ſinnes, both deſtroy the ſoule, though in a different degree: the very mote is deadly ſinne, though in nature the beame be more mortall. This diſtinction they borrowed from former ages, but abuſing the Primitive Church from whence they had it: for the ancient Fathers called ſome ſinnes *venial*, not becauſe they deſerved not death, but becauſe they were pardonable in regard of the Church, and did not incurre the cenſure of excommunication; and thoſe they called mortall or criminall ſinnes, which had the cenſure of excommunication paſſed againſt them: ſo that the Papiſts abuſe both Fathers and Scripture in this diſtinction.

Sinnes differing in degree.

Bellarm. de amiſſ. grat. & ſtat. pec. l.1.c.9.

How the Fathers called ſome ſinnes venial.

Thirdly, Chriſt naming the very eye, and not the face, or other parts of the body, would hereby give us to underſtand, what is the property and ſcope of raſh judgement; namely, to deface the very intention of his heart of whom cenſure is given. When *David* ſent his ſervants to *Hanun* King of Ammon, to comfort him

Raſh judgement perverts a mans good meaning.

after his fathers death; the Princes of *Ammon* told their lord, that *Davids* servants *were but spies that came to search out his city*: thus they judged rashly of *Davids* fact, and their intent was to corrupt the honest mind of *David*: perswading the King that *David* and his servants had another intent and end of their comming than they made known to the King. So that the rash censurer seeketh to blemish the good minde and conscience of his brother. And hence wee may well be warned to take notice of our naturall corruption, how that without Gods speciall grace we doe plainly hate our brother; else wee would never so suspitiously prie into his wayes, as to deprave his good meaning. Wee must therefore compent our selves with the speeches and actions of our brother, and take heed how we deale about the eye; that is, with his intent and meaning; that wee must leave to God, who only knowes the heart: and for his actions and speeches (if it may be) we must alwayes expound them in the better part: if we cannot defend a mans doing, yet we must excuse his meaning: if we cannot excuse his intent, yet wee must think the best of his conscience: if we cannot excuse his conscience, yet wee must judge it to be but a sinne of ignorance: if we cannot doe so, yet we must thinke that it was done in some grievous temptation, and that if we our selves had beene in like case, we should have done far worse: we know not when God may give grace to men, or when he leaves them to themselves, and therefore in regard of the mind and conscience, we must comprimit our judgement at all times.

A *peace, then comes sudden destruction.* Now men doe then most fearefully cry, peace, peace, unto themselves, when they either will not see their sinnes, or seeing them, doe not well consider thereof in their hearts. We therefore must labour for this grace to have a cleare sight into our sinnes: for without that we can never sorrow according unto God, nor repent unto life as we ought to doe.

And perceivest not, that is, though it may be thou seest it, yet thou doest not well consider of it. Here our Saviour noteth out a second maine fault in mans nature to be thought upon; namely, *carnall security*, whereby though in some small measure men see their offences, yet naturally they never think on them heartily and seriously as they ought to doe: S. *Paul* saith, *Awake thou that sleepest*, signifying, that by nature we lie slumbering in sinne; so as though we may sometime have a little glimmering thereof, yet wee never thorowly behold and consider them as we should: the Lord himselfe complains of this security in sinne in his owne people: *No man saith, what have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. This was the sinne of the old world; *they knew nothing till the flood came*, Mat. 24. 39. it may be they had now and then some conceit thereof, but they thought not seriously thereon: now as the dayes of *Noah* were, so shall be the dayes of the comming of the Son of man, *in regard of security*: and these are those dayes wherein we now live: for howsoever we sometime thinke on our sins, yet we looke not on them with both eyes, as we doe on our neighbours faults. We must here be warned to take heed of this sin: for it is a feare-full case, either not to see our sinnes; or seeing them, to passe them over without serious consideration. The Apostle saith, *when men say, peace,*

Why seest thou, &c. and how sayest thou to thy brother, in both these phrases consider how Christ would have all those which are to give judgement of the offences of others, to be themselves without reproofe and blametesse: they are no fit persons to give censure of those that bee under them. And therefore the Magistrate in the B towne and Common-wealth, the Minister in the Church, the master in the family, and every superior in his place, must labour to be unblameable: for if they be taunted with grosse sinnes, they can never thorowly purge them that bee under them. *A Minister* (saith *Paul*) *must be unreproveable*, 1 Tim. 3. 2. and so likewise the Magistrate, who is Gods vicegerent, and every governour in his place.

Lastly, in both verses observe the condition of those that are given to rash judgement: namely, that of all men they are the worst: Christ mareth them to carry beames in their eyes, when others have but motes or strawes. The man that is given to censure others, would seeme to be of all men most holy: but the truth is, there is none so bad as he though he be a Minister, yea C be hee what he will, nay the better is his place, the worse is his fault: and the more he is given to this sinne of censuring, the worse hee is, for the lesse he sees his owne sinnes: nay, let him live unblameably before men, yet hee hath a heart full of pride and selfe-love, and full of disdaine toward his brother. And therefore let us take heed of this sinne, even when it begins to creepe upon us.

V. 5 *Hypocrite, first, cast out the beame out of thine owne eye: and then shalt thou see clearely to cast out the mote out of thy brothers eye.*

D This verse containes a *remedy* against rash judgement: it depends upon the former verses as an answer to a secret objection that might thence arise: for whereas Christ had said, *Judge not*: and *why seest thou a mote in thy brothers eie, &c.* some man might say, belike then it is not lawfull to correct my brother by speech, and by reproofe to seeke amendment of his fault. To this Christ here answers; that hee forbids not brotherly correction and admonition, but the evill, corrupt, and unchristian manner of giving admonition and correction; whenas men take a preposterous course in censuring, and doe

Judges of sinners should be blameless.

Rash censurers the vilest persons.

The remedy of rash judgement.

doe not beginne with themselves in the first place, but with their brethren: as if our Saviour Christ had said, Hypocrite, thou hast greater faults than he whom thou judgest: and therefore if thou wilt take a right course in thy correction, beginne with thy selfe, reforme the great sinnes that be in thy selfe, and then shalt thou be fitter and better able to correct and reforme thy brother. So that these words containe two parts: 1. the remedy of rash judgement, *Hypocrite, first plucke out the beame out of thine owne eye*: 2. the fruit hereof, which is true *wisdome*, to be able to discerne aright of our neighbours fault, and also how it is to be cured, in these words, *and then shalt thou see clearely to cast out the mote out of thy brothers eye*. Of these in order.

The remedy against rash judgement is, for a man first to beginne with himselfe, reforming first his owne offences: which because it is here propounded by our Saviour Christ of set purpose, as a speciall remedy against this sinne, I will stand a little to shew how a man may cast out the beame out of his owne eye. Hereunto foure things are required: I. A man must turne the eye of his mind inward, and cast his cogitations towards his owne life and conscience, that so he may see and know the principall sins of his owne heart and life. To this purpose serveth the morall Law, which is as a glasse to let us see our maine and principall sinnes, which be the *beames* in our eyes here meant. And for direction herein, I will note out some speciall maine sinnes, which bein all men naturally; and which every one must well consider of, that will cast this beame out of his owne eye. The first common sin of all men, is a *guiltinesse* in *Adams* first offence; that is, his sin made ours by relation or imputation: for his eating the forbidden fruit, was no particular or private sinne, but the sinne of mans nature: and every one sinned in *Adam*, that was to descend of him by ordinary generation: for though wee were not borne when *Adam* sinned, yet by his sinne wee stand guilty of eternall death before God.

The second common sinne is a naturall disposition and proneness to every thing that is evill and against Gods Law, when occasion is offered, the sinne against the holy Ghost not excepted; for the same corruption and proneness to evill, which was in them that have committed this sinne, is in all men naturally; the difference stands onely in this, that all doe not fall into it. And this proneness to evill is the second head of original sinne.

The third common sinne is inward Idolatry, this is a most heynous sinne, and may be thus perceived: Every man by nature takes his heart from the true God, and bestowes it on some other thing: now looke whereon a man bestowes his heart, that thing he makes his God: and by Nature we love our selves, our sinnes, and the world more than God, and yeeld obedience to the devill, rather than to the true God. The

How to cast out a beame out of a mans owne eye.

1 Maine sins common to all.

2

3 Idolatry, the least.

A like may be find out our feare, joy, and trust, and of our trust and confidence, all which affections we set upon the devill, the world, and iniquity; yea, upon the creature; forsaking the Creator, who is blessed for ever: and hee that sees not this in himselfe, hath idolatry as yet reigning in his heart.

The fourth sin is *Hypocrisie*, which naturally reigneth in all man, till grace expell it: This hypocrisie finds in him; when men are about any good thing, they are more carefull to please God in the outward action, than with the service of the heart. Againe, they seeke more to please men than God. And lastly, they rather endeavour to perfoime the outward duties of the first Table, than of the second. This is a huge beame in B every mans eie naturally, which each one ought to see in himselfe, as well as the former.

The fifth sinne is *pride*, not outward in apparell, but *spiritually inward pride of the heart*, which stands in this; that a man thinks himselfe out of Christ to have in him some natural goodnesse, whereby he stands in Gods favour, and hath in himselfe perfect love, and perfect faith: this sin all men will condemne, and yet it cleaves fast to every man by nature. The Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. 2. 17. *said she was rich, and had need of nothing*; whereas indeed *she was poore, and blind, and naked*. This inward pride poysons Gods grace in the heart, it is a maine sinne, and the common cause of rash judgement.

The sixth sinne is that *particular sin* or *sins*, C wherewith every one is most assaulted; for howsoever the corruption of nature doth infect all men alike, yet every one that is of yeares shall finde himselfe more troubled with some sinnes than with others, by reason that corruption is in part either removed or restrained in him. Wherefore every one must enter into his owne heart, and there search and see what bee those particular sinnes, which most of all prevaile against him, troubling his heart, and causing him to dishonour God. These be his beams which keepe Gods grace out of his heart, which we must labour to finde out in our selves.

II. Duty. After we have some sight of these our maine sinnes, wee must in the next place labour to *see them in our selves as beames*, and to D feele the weight thereof: for commonly we either see them not at all in our selves, or if wee doe a little perceive them, yet wee see them not in their quantity as beames, but rather like motes or strawes. Now we shall come to see these sinnes in our selves as *beames* in their just quantity: first, if we *compare them with other mens sinnes*, as with *Adams* first sinne: for doubtlesse we have many particular sinnes in our hearts that be as great or greater than *Adams* sinne was, considered in the fact: and yet by that sin *Adam* brought not onely on himselfe, but on all his posterity mortality and destruction, the first, and the second death. Againe, wee shall come to see the grievousnesse of our sinnes, if we consider them in

4 Hypocrisie.

5 Pride.

6

How to perceive the grievousnesse of our sinnes.

 the

the punishment thereof; that is, *subjection to all* A *woe and misery*, yea, and to *death* in selfe in this life, and also to death *eternall* after this life, with the devill and his angels: this is the reward of every sinne in it selfe. Thirdly, consider these thy sinnes, as they were *laid upon the holy person of our Saviour Christ*, for which he endured not onely outward bodily torments on the crosse, but inwardly in soule apprehended the whole wrath of God due unto us for the same, which caused him to sweat *water and blood*, and to cry *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee.* This being well weighed, will let us see that our sinnes are no moats, but huge and great beames, such as are able to crush us in peeces, under the heavy wrath of God. Lastly, have recourse to the *last commandement*, which forbids the very first thoughts and motions in the heart, that bee against our neighbour, and against God, though wee never give consent of will thereto; nay, though wee abhorre the fact in selfe: as when we see our neighbours oxe or his asse, to wish in our hearts, O that this were mine, though wee detest the stealing thereof: now if this first motion bee a sinne deserving damnation, how heynous be the sinnes of our nature, and the transgressions of our life, wherein we have given full consent to rebell against God?

III. Duty. The third thing required to this casting out the beame out of our owne eye, is that which is here intended by our Saviour Christ; namely, to *forceasse to judge others, and* C *to begin to judge our selves for our owne sins: for if we would judge our selves, wee should not be judged*, 1 Cor. 11. 31. Now we doe then judge our selves, when in our owne hearts wee give sentence against our selves, and condemne our selves in regard of our owne sinnes. Thus *David* judged himselfe, Psalm. 51. 1. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to the multitude of thy mercies*: as if he should say, Lord, one mercy will not serve the turne, so farre have I plunged my selfe into hell by my grievous sinnes; but in the multitude of thy mercies doe them all away. And in the words following, vers. 2. *Wash mee thoroughly from mine iniquities*, hee confesseth himselfe to be so deeply stained with the filth of sinne, that a little washing will not serve. So when the Lord had spoken unto *Iob*, and made him see and know himselfe, hee cries out, *Behold, I am vile*, Job 39. 37. and againe; *Now I abhorre my selfe and repent in dust and ashes*, for those things that I have said and done, Chap. 42. 6. In such sort also did the *Prodigall sonne* judge himselfe, crying out, that he had *sinned against heaven, and against his father, and was not worthy to be called his sonne*, Luk. 15. 21. The Apostle *Paul* likewise confesseth against himselfe, that hee was the *head of all sinners*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. And thus must wee condemne our selves, and say with *Daniel* in his prayer for the people, chap. 9. 7. *Open shame and confusion of face belongs unto us.*

IV. Duty. After wee have thus judged our selves, wee must labour to breake off, and to amend our former evill wayes, endeavouring by all meanes that sinne may bee abolished and weakened in us more and more: and this is indeed the *removing of the beame out of our owne eyes*: that so we may be fitter to censure and reforme others. Of this last dutie the Apostle speaketh, Rom. 14. 13. *Let us not judge one another any more, but iudge your judgement rather in this, that no man put a stumbling blocke before his brother*: that is, that he live without offence. These foure duties ought every one to practise: and to move us hereunto, first, let us consider, that it is Gods commandement in this place, that wee should first reforme our owne selves. Secondly, that our state and case is fearefull and miserable, without this reformation; if a man have but a thorne in his finger, he cannot be well till it be plucked out; what case then is he in, that hath a huge beame in his eye, the most tender part of the whole body: that is, hath his heart and conscience pricked with the sting of sinne? and therefore it neerely concernes every one to remove it. Thirdly, we shall never be able to judge aright of our selves, of others, or of the life to come, till we practise this duty: and therefore in the feare of God let us seriously set our selves unto it.

Thus much of the remedy it selfe; now follow two circumstances therein further to be considered: I. The *party* to whom the remedy is given; that is, *an Hypocrite*: II. *When* this remedy is to be practised; *First, plucke out, &c.* For the party: by *Hypocrite*, we must understand him, that in heart and speech is prone to conceive, and give rash judgement of other mens sayings and actions: and good cause there is why he is so called, for this man hath the sin of hypocrisie reigning in him, he desires to seeme more holy than others, and therfore gives himselfe to censure others, that by debating of others he may advance himselfe: see this in the hypocriticall Pharisie; *I thanke God that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican, I fast twice in the weeke, &c.* Luk. 18. 10, 11. But they must know, that this censuring of others is a fruit of hypocrisie arising out of an hollow heart.

D The second circumstance is the time *when this duty is to be practised*; namely, in the *first* place, *First cast out, &c.* Here then wee have a notable direction for the manner and order of giving brotherly correction; *It must begonne with a mans owne selfe, and end in a mans neighbour*: and by proportion, looke by how much every one is neerer unto us, so much the sooner must hee be corrected and judged. If thou be a private man that art to give censure, first begin with thy selfe; then judge thy kindred; thirdly, thine acquaintance; and last of all, strangers. So a master of a family must first judge himselfe, then his owne family, and after he may judge his friends and neighbours, and last of all, strangers:

Matth. 6. vers. 5.

Reforme our wayes.

Motives to all the duties.

1

2

3

An Hypocrite.

A rule for brotherly correction.

Matth. 7. vers. 5.

strangers: and the like must everie superiour A practise in his place. Now by this order to bee observed in brotherly censure, wee may easily see that the world is farre wide in the practice of this duties for everie one thinks well of himselfe, and also of his friends and acquaintance, and therefore spares them and will not censure them; but for strangers, them will he not sticke to reproach and to condemne: but this is a preposterous course, swerving farre from this direction of our Saviour Christ.

Reforming our selves brings spirituall wisdome.

And then shalt thou see cleerely to cast out the mote out of thy brothers eye. This is the fruit of the former remedie; by curing himselfe first, a man comes to see cleerely what his neighbours fault is, and how it is to be cured and amended. Where wee may note, that out of the amendment of our selves, followes a spirituall gift of B judgement and wisdome, whereby wee see aright how to reforme our brothers fault. Hence I gather this generall doctrine, that *Right wisdome and understanding followes the reformation of our owne hearts and lives. The beginning of wisdome is the feare of the Lord*, Psal. 111. 10. that is, true wisdome and good understanding comes from a reverent awe of God, in regard of his Word and Commandement: so Psalm. 119. 100. *I was made wiser than the ancient, by keeping thy commandement*: first *David* reformed himselfe, and then hee became exceeding wise. As it is said of [a] *Manasses*, that when he repented and humbled himselfe, *hee knew that the Lord was God*: and after *Nebuchadnezzer* was humbled, *his understanding was restored to him*, Dan. 4. 32. for, *God teacheth the humble his wayes*, Psal. 25. 9. The proud man is he that builds up his sins with posts and beames, and such an one the Lord will not teach; but him that plucks downe these posts by amendment of his life, will the Lord instruct in the way that hee should walke. Christ saith to his Disciples, *Yee are my friends, if yee keepe my commandements*: and *to his friends will he make knowen all things needfull that he hath heard of his Father*, Joh. 15. 14, 15. by all which it is plaine, that right judgement followes true reformation of life.

[a] 2 Chron. 33. 13.

Motive to understand Gods word.

Vses. I. Hereby we see how to come to understand the holy Scriptures read or heard; namely, by the amendment of our owne lives: First, reforme thine owne heart and life, and then shalt thou have true judgement given unto thee, to bee able in reading or hearing, to understand Gods word, at least so much thereof, as shall be needfull for thee; and doubtlesse, the cause why most men profit so little in the Scriptures, though they heare and reade them much, is for that they looke not to the reformation of their owne lives and consciences, according to the Word. Prov. 1. 23. *Turne you at my correction* (saith Wisdome) *and I will powre out my minde unto you, and make you understand my words.* The Student therefore that must fit himselfe to get true understanding in Gods Word, for the edification of Gods Church, must remember this direction, and labour first to plucke out the beame out of his owne eye, and then shall hee see cleerely to reade with judgement the word of God, and to discerne the true way of everlasting life, for the good of Gods people: but if thou come in thy sinnes, thou readest without profit.

II. Vse. Againe, wouldest thou know thy selfe to be the childe of God? remember then to purge thy heart and life from all sinne, for thence floweth true understanding, and thereupon God will certifie thy conscience of thine election and reconciliation: but if thou suffer thy selfe to lie in sinne, thou must long wait for this certificate, and never have it.

How to know our adoption.

III. Vse. Many men there be that will be of no religion, because there are so many and divers opinions about matters of religion in the world; and therefore till some generall Councell have determined of the truth of religion, they will live as they doe: but these men must know, that they take a wrong course: If they would come to know the truth of religion, they must first reforme their lives; but while they live in sinne, they can never see what is good, what is bad; what is truth, what is falthood in religion, Joh. 7. 17. *If any man will doe my Fathers will*, (saith Christ) *he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speake of my selfe*: where he plainly gives us to understand, that true judgement of religion comes C from obedience unto God. This is the right way to reforme an Atheist; first, to bring him to obedience. And in a word, whosoever thou art, that wouldest in thy calling, whatsoever it be, please God, and doe good to others; first, purge thine owne heart and life from sinne, and then shalt thou see cleerely wherein thou failest, and how thou art to amend thy fault, and afterward to doe good unto others.

How to know true religion.

A second generall point. Further, in this remedie our Saviour Christ opposeth *brotherly correction*, unto *rash judgement*; and withall, prescribes *brotherly correction* as a dutie to be practised among Gods people. Touching this point, foure things are to bee considered: I. Who is to correct. II. Who is to bee corrected. III. What is to bee corrected. And IV. In what manner. For the first: the partie that must correct is a *brother*, that is, any member of Gods Church: so it is said, *Then shalt thou see cleerely to put out the mote out of thy brothers eye*: and Levit. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but shalt plainly rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer him to sinne*: and Matt. 18. 15. *If thy brother sin against thee*, that is, doe thee any wrong; or else sin against God, and thou bee privie to it: (for that sinne may bee said to bee against man, whereto hee is privie, though the wrong bee not against him, because there is an offence given unto him:) *Then tell him his fault between him and thee alone*: that is, correct and admonish him privately.

Brotherly correction commanded.

1. Who must correct.

privately. Against, everie man is bound in conscience to save his brothers soule, which oftimes may be done by *brotherly correction*; and for want thereof, many times the soule may perish: and therefore it is everie mans dutie to correct his brother; yet with this clause and caution, that just occasion be offered, and time and place observed; for there bee certaine particular exceptions, in which a man is freed from this dutie, and all because there is no just occasion of correction offered: as first, if he be not certaine of the fault committed, for all lawfull correction, is of faults certainely and truly known. Secondly, if the partie offending doe repent, for the end of correction is to bring the offender to amendment. Thirdly, if there be no hope of his amendment, Prov. 9.8. *Reprove not a scorner*; that is, such an one as mocks thee for thy labour. Fourthly, if it may in better manner, and to better purpose bee performed by others, which for place and abilitie may and will more fitly performe it. But yet out of these cases, if just occasion bee offered, everie one is to performe brotherly correction unto his brother.

Here I note one particular instruction; that not only the Minister of Gods word is our Pastor, but even everie brother after a sort is a Pastor, in regard that he must watch over the lives of his brethren for their good and amendment. It is the sinne of our time, that everie one thinks he hath no charge laid on him in regard of his brothers life and estate. This was *Cains* sinne towards his brother *Abel*, hee denied himselfe to be *his brothers keeper*: if any man sinne, the common speech is, What is it to me? let them looke to it whom it concernes. But this ought not to be, one man ought to observe another, and use also brotherly correction for the reformation of faults certainly known. This is a dutie of love and mercie, tending to the good of our brother, and to the salvation of his soule: in conscience wee are bound to releeve the bodies of our poore brethren that be in perill and want, much more then are wee bound to looke unto their soules, that they perish not for want of admonition. We must time backe our enemies Oxe or Asse that wandreth, much more our brother from going to perdition.

II. Point. Who is to be corrected? Out of whose eye is the mote to bee taken? to wit, *a brother*; *out of thy brothers eye*. By a *brother* here Christ meaneth not everie neighbour, for that is everie man; but everie one that is a *member of that Church, whereof wee are members*, and professeth the same religion which wee doe, being admitted into the Church by the same Sacrament of Baptisme, whereby wee are admitted. This is plaine in the exhortation of Christ, Matth. 18.17. *If thy brother sinne against thee, tell him his fault betweene him and thee*: and so proceed (if hee heare thee not) till hee come to the censure of the Church: which were in vaine, if the partie were no member of the Church. *If any one that is called a brother* (saith Saint *Paul*) bee a fornicatour, covetous, &c. *with such an one eat not*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. and hee addeth, *What have I to doe to judge them that are without? doe yee not judge them that are within?* Now here the former order must be observed; that first, a man must correct himselfe, secondly, his family and kinred, next a brother of the same Congregation with him. And if good order be observed, hee may admonish a brother that is a member of another particular Church; but beyond this wee may not goe, though wee must carrie our selves so to them that are without, that by our good conversation wee may winne them to God. And further this is to bee known, that in the Church of God, authoritie and dignitie frees no person from brotherly correction; whereupon *Paul* bids the *people* of Colossa, to say unto *Archippus* their Pastor, *Take heed to thy ministerie, which thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfill it*, Colossi. 4. 17. And hence we may learne this dutie; when wee offend in word or deed, wee must submit our selves willingly to brotherly correction; wee must not say, as sometime one of the Israelites that strove with his brother, said unto *Moses* for reproving him, *Who made thee a Judge and a Ruler over us?* but being faultie, we must submit our selves to the correction of our brother, though we be above them in place. *It is better to heare the reproofe of a wise man* (saith *Salomon*) *than the song of a foole*, Eccles. 7. 7. It may bee the song of a foole will more delight us, but sure it is, the wise mans reproofe is far more profitable. This *David* testified, by desiring that a *the righteous might smite him*; accounting it as a *pretious balme upon his head, which he would never want*: yea, nature it selfe doth teach us this, that it is better to bee reproved even of an enemie, than to bee praised of a friend: according to that of *Salomon*, Prov. 27.6. *Open rebuke is better than secret love*.

III. Point. For what is a brother to be admonished or corrected? not only for *great* offences, but for *lesser sins*: we must pull out not only beames, but strawes and motes out of his eye: for here lesser sins are as strawes and motes to greater sinnes, which be as beames and posts. The reason why wee must correct our brother for small offences, is because everie great sinne hath his beginning of some little and small sin; and therefore it is a dutie of brotherly correction, to cut off sinne in the head, before it grow out to the full. Thus the Lord dealt with b *Cain*, he reproved him for his wrath and malice against his brother, testified by his sad countenance, before he live his brother; but *Cain* not yeelding to the Lords reproofe, came at the last to the grievous sinne of murther.

In this third point we may take a view of that heavenly order which Christ hath left in his Church, for the reformation, not only of greater

Matth. 7. vers. 5.

A

B

Exod. 2. 14.

C

a Psal. 141. 5.

The matter of the reproofe.

D

b Gen. 4. 5.

Matth. 7. vers. 5.

ter crimes, but of lesser sinnes; for there be many sinnes committed which cannot bee corrected by the sword of the Magistrate, neither yet by the publike censure of the Church; as lying, foolish jesting, and other offences in behaviour and attire; yet these will not Christ permit to be in his Church, and therfore hath provided brotherly correction to cut them off.

The manner how to reprove.

IV. Point. How is brotherly correction to be performed? Although the manner of brotherly correction bee not here expressly set downe, yet it is implyed, where it is said, *Then shalt thou see cleerely, &c.* I will stand a little to shew how this dutie is to bee performed. In brotherly correction these things are required: 1. Christian wisdome to see cleerely into the fault, and also how it is to bee amended. The Author to the Hebrewes makes it the dutie of everie Christian to *observe his brother*: not for this end, to upbraid him with his faults; but that hee may rightly discerne thereof, and also know how to correct him. And here comes a common fault to bee reproved, many are forward and hastie to correct their brethren, but yet it shall be upon bare rumours and uncertaine grounds; they will not stay till they know the fault thorowly and certainly: whereupon it comes to passe many times, that the reprover beares the blame; for the partie reproved saith, there is no such matter, the thing is otherwise, and so the other becomes a rash censurer. 2. In Christian correction, there must be observation of fit circumstances; as time and place; else the good admonition may bee lesse effectuall. Wee shall see the practice of this in the word of *God*: *Abigail* observed a fit time to reprove her husband for his churlish answer to *Davids* servants, and therefore told him not of it till his feast of sheepe-shearing was ended, and the wine gone out of his head. 3. The manner of our brothers offence must be considered, whether it proceed of humane frailtie, or otherwise; if his fault proceed from humane frailtie, then *Pauls* lesson may be practised, Gal. 6. 1. *Yee that are spiritualll restore such an one with the spirit of meeknesse*. The phrase there is borrowed from Surgeons, who being to deale with a broken joynt, will handle the same verie tenderly; and so must they bee dealt withall in reproofe, that sinne of humane frailtie. Example of this mildnesse in reproofe wee have in *Nathan*, who reproved *David* in a parable, and so brought him to condemne himselfe: and the Apostle *Paul* reproving the Corinthians in the beginning of the first Epistle, doth include him and *Apollos* in the same reproofe, as though they had beene guiltie of the same crime, 1 Cor. 4. 6. And giving direction to *Timothy* how to carrie himselfe in the Church of God, though hee allow him to use rebuke and reproofe, 2 Tim. 4. 2. yet hee bids him, *exhort an Elder*; therein giving good direction for admonition: if the partie be an Elder, though reproofe be not unlawfull, yet it is not so fit as exhortation: and the like mildnesse must bee used toward all those that sinne of humane frailtie. But if the offence proceed from wilfulnesse and obstinacie, then the judgements of God must bee denounced against them, to drive them to repentance. 4. Everie one that is to correct another, must consider himselfe, and his owne estate, knowing that of himselfe hee may fall into the like offence. So *Paul* bids them that are to seeke the restoring of such as are fallen, *to consider themselves*, Gal. 6. 1. 5. Brotherly correction must bee delivered with *Doctrine* and instruction: 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee before God, to reprove, exhort, and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine*. He that will admonish, must first himselfe bee resolved, that the thing done is a sinne; then he must propound it to the partie, as a sinne out of Gods word; and deliver the reproofe, not in his owne name, but in the name of God; so as hereby the partie may know himselfe to have offended, and also say, that hee is reproved of God himselfe rather than of man. This ought all superiours to practise, in correcting and admonishing their inferiours; they must not goe thereto in rage, but in long suffering; not rudely, but with *Doctrine*, that the partie offending may see his fault. And thus much for this dutie of brotherly correction.

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Heb. 12. 2, 4.

2

1 Sam. 25. 6, 37.

3

2 Sam. 12. 1, 2, &c.

1 Tim. 5. 1.

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v. 6 *Give not that which is holy unto dogs: neither cast yee your pearles before swine: lest they tread them under their feet, and turning againe all to rent you.*

Seventh part of Christs Sermon.

Hitherto the Evangelist hath set downe the severall heads of Christs Sermon more at large; but from this verse to the end of the Chapter, hee handleth briefly the points which follow. This verse dependeth not upon the former, but herein our Saviour Christ layes downe a new point of instruction, directing his Disciples, and in them all Ministers, unto that Christian discretion which ought to be observed in the dispensation of the word of God. And his direction is here propounded in a prohibition of *giving holy things to dogs, or casting pearles before swine*: which is enforced by a double reason, *lest they tread them, &c.*

Now for the better understanding hereof, first I will speake of the words, because they are hard and difficult; and then come to the Doctrines.

In the words foure things are to bee sought out: 1. What is meant by *holy things*. 2. What is meant by *pearles*. 3. What is meant by *dogs*. And 4. What is meant by *swine*. For the first, by that *which is holy*, wee must understand, first and properly, *the word of God*, written in the

the bookes of the old and new Testament, in his right and holy use; that is, read, dispensed, and preached: and consequently, by *holy things* are meant the *Sacraments*, and Christian admonition. *Gods word* is called an *holy thing* for sundrie causes, but principally for these two; first, because it is holy in it selfe: and secondly, in effect and operation. It is holy in it selfe, because it is set apart by God, to be in the Church in stead of his own lively voice unto his people for the revealing and determining of all things to be beleeved and done in his Church. In the old Testament, God himselfe spake by a lively voice unto the Patriarks, and after the giving of the Law, hee gave answer to the High Priest at the Mercie-seat: and yet we are not inferiour to them, though we want that lively voice; for wee have the written Word in stead thereof, which is answerable everie way thereunto: for looke what the written Word saith, is as much as if the Lord from Heaven should speake by a lively voice: and so consequently, it is to us in stead of the Arke of God, a pledge of his presence. And thus it is holy in it selfe. Secondly, Gods word is *holy* in regard of operation; *for* it is the instrument of the Spirit, set apart by God himselfe, to be the meanes whereby hee sanctifies and reformes the hearts and lives of his children. And consequently, the *Sacraments* are *holy things*, for they are the Word made visible; so likewise is Christian admonition grounded upon Gods word.

A

From this Doctrine sundrie duties are to be learned; First, we are oft commanded in Gods word, *to draw neere unto God, to seeke him, to feare him, and to walke before him in his presence*: How shall wee doe these things, seeing God is invisible, and in glorie and majestie is in Heaven? Surely wee must consider the word of God, which is that *holy thing* set apart by God, to bee in stead of his owne lively voice; and therefore we need not seeke for him that is invisible, but wee must have recourse unto the Word, and labour to have it present with us in our hearts, in our lives and consciences. *Enoch* walked before God, not only in regard of his infinite majestie, which though it bee invisible, is everie where present; but principally in respect of his Word, setting that before him wheresoever he was. When wee are commanded to *feare God*, wee must know that that is done, not only when wee stand in awe of his glorious Majestie, but principally when wee feare to offend God, commanding us in his Word. The Apostle saith, that *the Holy Ghost dwells in our hearts*: which must not be thought to bee meant of that infinite substance of the Holy Spirit, but of the dwelling of the Word, which is made effectuall by the Holy Spirit: for faith ever hath relation to the Word, and being beleeved, it dwels in the heart, and makes the Spirit, which works by the same Word present also. In which regard *Paul* saith *Now I live not, but Christ lives in me*; which hee expoundeth after, saying, *I live now by faith in the sonne of God*: because the word of Christ was present with him, and the grace of faith that lives by that Word.

B

Secondly, seeing the word of God is of that holinesse, we must learne to use the same publikely or privately with all reverence, carefully sanctifying our selves thereunto. When the people came to receive the Law in Mount Sinai, they were sanctified three dayes before; and the same preparation for substance ought wee to make before we heare the word of God: First, *we must wash our hands in innocencie, and then compasse the Altar of the Lord*: The Word and Sacraments are holy in themselves, but not so to us, out of their holy use; and therefore if wee would reape profit to our selves by them, we must prepare our hearts thereunto.

Psal. 26. 6.

Thirdly, whereas the Word is unto us the voice of God, and the meanes of sanctification; wee may learne that in the Congregation of Gods people ordinarily, the pure word of God alone ought to be heard, without the mixture of the words of men, be they never so holy: for it is not said of the words of any man, that they are *that holy thing*. The Lord himselfe alone had the appointment of the making of the *holy oyle*, which was to anoint the Kings and Priests under the Law: neither might any man adde any thing thereto, though it were never so pure and good, nor make any oyle like unto it: so likewise the *trumpets* that served for the Tabernacle to assemble the people, the Lord himselfe alone had the appointment of them; and none might use any other, though it were made of most pure gold. Had the Lord this care over his Sanctuarie under the Law, to take the appointment of these things to himselfe alone? and shall we thinke that the trumpet of his holy Word, which now by his appointment foundeth in the Congregation of the Saints, may admit a mixture with the words of men, humane, or divine, be they never so holy? The ancient Church was farre from this mixture; and therefore [a] *forbade the publike reading of the Apocrypha*, which yet are more excellent bookes than the writings of men, published since the Apostles. But it is said, that they only finde fault with this kinde of preaching, which cannot attaine unto it. I answer, It is no point of the greatest learning to use the sayings of Fathers and Poets in preaching: and they which use it not, restraine therefrom, not because they cannot do it, but because they dare not mingle the sayings of men with the word of God, which is that holy thing, serving in stead of Gods owne glorious voice, in all matters that concerne our faith and obedience, and being the only sufficient instrument of our sanctification; and therefore it were to bee wished, that in the Congregations of the Saints, the pure word of God might sound alone unto Gods people; that as they are begotten alone of this *immortall seed*, so they might be fed alone with this *sincere milke*.

This pure Word alone ought to be taught.

Exod. 31. 25. 28.

Exod. 30. 32. 33.

C

Prov. 3. 14.

a Synod. Laod. cap. 59.

D

II. Point.

Doctrines of Gods word are pearles.

II. Point. What is meant by *pearles*? *Ans.* The wholsome *doctrines* and *instructions* of Gods word, contained partly in commandements, and partly in sweet and heavenly promises: so Matth. 12. 46. the *Gospell preached* is compared to a *pretious pearle*. And further we are to note, that these wholsome instructions are called *your pearles*, (Christ speaking to his Disciples and other hearers:) now they are so called in two respects: First, in regard of the Apostles and other Ministers their successours; because they are the Lords stewards, to dispense the Word and the doctrine thereof to Gods people. Secondly, in regard of all true beleevers and servants of God, that have care to know and to obey the word of God: for everie beleever hath a speciall right unto Gods word above other men: to which purpose the Lord saith, *Binde up the testimony, seale up the Law among my Disciples*. Isa. 8. 16. that is, commend and commit my Word unto my Disciples; there giving a speciall right and interest unto them in the word of salvation: for they have the true judgement and meaning thereof: they keepe it in their hearts, and express the power of it in their lives: they have the use and benefit thereof in everie estate in this world, and unto their eternall salvation in Heaven.

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B

How to esteeme of Gods word.

Prov. 3. 14.

C

How to comfort our selves in trouble.

From this, that the Doctrines of Gods word are our *pearles*, first, wee are taught to place all our riches in the word of God, for that is our Jewell, and our principall treasure: of this *Salomon* saith, *Her merchandise are better than merchandise of silver, and the gaine thereof better than gold*. In the valuing of this pearle, *Davids* practice is notable, who made the *testimonies of God his heritage, and the verie joy of his heart*. Psal. 119. 111. *and esteemed them above gold, yea above most fine gold*, v. 127.

Secondly, wee must hereby learne to content our selves in all casualties and calamities of this life, with this *pearle of the word of God*; for though wee lose friends, health, goods, or good name, yet this pearle of good Doctrines and sweet promises is not lost; if that were taken away with the losse of outward commodities, then there were some cause of discomfort: but seeing this jewell remaines with us in all estates, therefore herewith wee must stay and comfort our selves, as *David* did, counting Gods promises his *comfort in trouble*. Psal. 119. 50. *and his songes in his pilgrimage*, v. 54.

1 Tim. 3. 9.

Thirdly, this must teach us to use the Doctrines and promises of Gods word, as pearles; wee must locke them up in our hearts, and have them in faithfull keeping in our memories. A man that hath an earthly jewell that is of any worth, will bee verie carefull to locke it up in the surest chest he hath; how much more care ought wee to have of these true pearles of heavenly instructions? As the Holy Ghost speaks of Deacons, they must bee such as *keepe the mysterie of faith in good conscience*: so must everie one of us be *carefull keepers* of this heavenly pearle. This was *Moses* practice. Luke 2. 51. *hee pondered the sayings of Christ in his heart*: and *David hid the word of God in his heart, that he might not sinne against the Lord*, Psal. 119. 11.

IV. Instruct. The Doctrines and promises in Gods word are the pearles of the Apostles and Ministers; therefore, *they above others in all ages and times, ought to have a speciall care, by all good meanes to preserve the purity of doctrine in the Church of God*. That is *Pauls* charge to *Timothy*, *keepe that which is committed unto thee*: that is, *that wholesome doctrine which thou hast learned of me*: and this nearely concerneth Ministers at this day, that as by the good meanes of others, they have received true doctrine, purified from the dregges of Popery, so they should preserve and keepe the same from all taint of corruption to their posterity.

Ministers must be specially carefull of doctrine.

1 Tim. 6. 20.

The *third* and *fourth* things to be considered, are teaching *dogges and swine*; where these two points are to be handled: I. What are here properly meant by *dogges* and *swine*? II. Who must *give judgement* of men to be *dogges* and *swine*: and III. *Where they are to be found*. For the first: By *dogges* and *swine*, we must understand the *enemies* of Gods word; yet not all enemies, for so every sinner should be a *dogge* and a *swine*: but only such as are *malicious obstinate enemies*, manifestly convicted of their enmity to Gods word and doctrine, of whose amendment there is no hope. And that these are here to be understood, appeares by these reasons: *I.* From the text it selfe, which describeth them by this, that *treading the words of instruction under foot, they doe turne againe, and all to-rent the Teachers thereof*: that is, they doe persecute them both by word and deed, in all reproachfull speeches, and cruell actions.

C

Dogs and swine are obstinate enemies.

II. Reason. In the word of God wee shall finde that Christ and his Apostles preached to dogges (for such are all men by nature;) The Scribes and Pharisees, a generation of Vipers, came to *John* baptisme unrepelled, though not unreproved: Matth. 3. 6, 7. and Christ himselfe telleth *the woman of Canaan, that it was not lawfull to give the childrens bread to dogges*: that is, to the Gentiles: and yet he sent his Disciples to preach to all nations: and the woman her selfe, by reason of her faith, was received to mercy, and made partaker of the crumbs that fell from the childrens table. Againe, our Saviour Christ preached to the Scribes and Pharisees, even then when he wept over Jerusalem for their impenitency: yea, this is a truth, that because men are naturally dogges and swine, therefore they must have the word of God preached unto them, to purifie and sanctifie them, unlesse they be obstinate and impenitent enemies to the Word, of whom is no hope of recovery. *III. Reason.* These obstinate enemies here are called dogs and swine, by allusion to unclean beasts under the Law; of which sort were *dogs* and *swine*, which were prohibited

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Matth. 15. 26.

the

the Jewes to bee eaten, or offered in ſacrifice to God: Chriſt therefore here by alluſion to that ceremony: meanes ſuch perſons as are excluded from the holy things of the Lord, and have no right or intereſt into the Lords Word or Sacraments; ſuch as both in heart and life be uncleane as dogs, and dogs, and will not bee purified. *IV. Reaſon. Paul* chargeth *Titus*, that *after once or twice admonition, he ſhould reject an heretike, knowing that ſuch an one is perverted and ſinneth, being damned of his owne ſelfe*: that is, ſinneth wilfully and obſtinately, and in ſo ſinning condemneth himſelfe in his owne heart and conſcience: and ſuch are meant by *dogs* and *ſwine* in this place.

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Now the difference of theſe two may be this: By *dogs* are meant obſtinate enemies that *maliciouſly* revile the miniſterie of the Word, the doctrine of God, and the meſſengers thereof: ſuch a dog was *Alexander the Copper-ſmith*, 2 Tim. 4. 14. and ſuch were many of the *Iewes* become ſoone after Chriſts aſcention, who reviled the Apoſtle *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and blaſphemed the doctrine which they taught, Acts 13. 45. and of this ſort are all convicted obſtinate heretikes. By *ſwine* are meant obſtinate enemies that doe contemne the word of God; either becauſe they will not admit reformation of life by it, ſuch as *Ahab* and *Herod* were; or becauſe they ſcorne and mocke at the word of God, as they doe, of whom *Peter* ſpeakes, *that mocke at the promiſes of Chriſts ſecond comming*.

B

The ſecond point touching theſe perſons is, *who muſt give judgement of any man or any people to be dogs and ſwine*: we muſt know that it is not in the power and libertie of any private man to give judgement of another that hee is a *dog* or a *ſwine*; but it is a publike dutie belonging to the Miniſters and Governours of the Church to give judgement in this caſe. Matth. 18. 17. Before a man muſt bee reputed as a *Publicane*, and as an *Heathen*, the *cenſure of the Church* muſt paſſe upon his behaviour; and from the judgement of the Church muſt private men hold others as Publicanes and Heathen. Indeed our Saviour Chriſt and his Apoſtles gave this judgement of men particularly and peremptorily; as *Paul* of *Alexander* the Copper-ſmith: but we muſt underſtand, what authoritie, and what ſpirit Chriſt and his Apoſtles had; which becauſe wee have not, wee cannot give ſuch judgement upon men. Further, here wee are to know, that judgement upon others is two-fold; *Judgement of certainitie*, or *judgement of humane wiſdome*: The *judgement of certainitie*, touching any mans ſtate, belongs only to God, and to them to whom God revealeth the ſame. The *judgement of humane wiſdome* is, when the Church of God, in the feare of God, give judgement as truly and as neerely as they can, who is a dog and who is a ſwine: and this only is the judgement of the Church, which alſo is conditionall; and namely, *till they repent*: becauſe they know not the

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times that God hath appointed for the converſion of ſinners. And by this we are taught, to comprimit our judgement of any man, in regard of his ſinnall eſtate, though hee bee an unrepentant ſinner, refuſing inſtruction: for moſt heinous ſinners have beene converted.

Where dogs and ſwine are to be found.

The third point, *where theſe dogs and ſwine are to bee found*: It is not in the power of any ordinarie Miniſter, or other man, to determine of any one, that he is a *dog* or a *ſwine*; for in ſuch doe ſinall impenitencie, and wilfull obſtinacie concurre; which wee are not able to ſay certainely, are come upon any man or woman while they live among us: and yet this may be ſaid with good conſcience, that there is in many a fearefull declination to the properties of dogs and ſwine, even in this age of ours; for many will heare the Word, receive the Sacraments, and profeſſe that they hope to bee ſaved by Chriſt; and yet they will raile on his Miniſters, and ſpeake againſt their Miniſterie: yea, the times are now, wherein many in open ſpeech will not ſticke to revile and condemne thoſe, that have beene the moſt excellent inſtruments of Gods mercie in his Church: among many I will name one, M. *Iohn Calvin*, that worthy inſtrument of the Goſpell, is in the mouthes of many Students condemned as an erroneous perſon, teaching falſe and dangerous doctrine. Yea, many there be, that come to the Lords Table, and yet will not brooke reformation of life; they will not bee drawen from their drunkenneſſe, ignorance, adulterie, and covetouſneſſe. A third ſort there are, that take occaſion from Gods word, to live in their ſinnes, and to maintaine their wicked lives; as from the doctrine of Gods eternall predeſtination, becauſe the Scripture teacheth, that Gods decree therein is unchangeable; therefore ſome ſay, they will live as they liſt: others, becauſe the Word ſaith, we are to be ſaved by faith alone, therefore they refuſe to walke in good workes: and others looke to be ſaved by Gods mercie alone, and therefore they will not labour either for knowledge, or faith, as they ought to doe: and ſome, hearing the doctrine of the *denialle of our ſelves*, doe ſay, the word of God is too ſtrait a doctrin, barring men from laughter, and mirth, and other recreations; and therefore they will none of Gods word: now though wee cannot call theſe men *dogs*, becauſe we know not what they may be hereafter; yet we may truly ſay, theſe be practices of dogs and ſwine.

And thus wee ſee what is meant by *holy things*, by *pearles*, by *dogs*, and *ſwine*; from whence the meaning of Chriſt may bee plainly thus ſet downe: *Give not that which is holy*, &c. that is, *have regard how, and to whom yee diſpenſe the Word and Sacraments, and if any perſon be openly convicted of obſtinate enmitie to your doctrine, to ſuch publiſh not my Word, bee they dogs in railing, or ſwine in ſenſeleſſe contemning and ſcorning of the ſame.*

The Vſes. 1. Hence we may ſee what courſe

Heavenly wiſdom muſt be diſpenſed.

is to be uſed of Gods Miniſters in the preaching and diſpenſing of his holy word; they muſt firſt preach and publiſh the Word of God to all men without exception, grace muſt be offered to all, good and bad; then they muſt obſerve what fruit and effect the Word hath with them, whether it worke reformation of life in them, or not: and though as yet they ſee not that fruit thereof in them, yet they muſt not condemne them as Dogges; but rather *wait and pray for their converſion, to ſee if at any time God will give them repentance*, according as Saint *Paul* chargeth *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 2. 25. Thirdly, having waited for their converſion, hee muſt labour to convince their very conſcience of the truth which they in heart and life deny: ſo as he may ſay with *Paul*, *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that periſh*, 2 Cor. 4. 3. but if after all this, they give evident ſigns of malicious and obſtinate enmitie againſt the Word, ſcorning and railing on the Doctrine of God, and on the Miniſters thereof, then are they to be cals out by the Church, and to bee accounted as Dogges, and to be barred from the Word of life till they repent. This was Chriſts owne practice towards the Jewes: at the firſt he preached unto them the Goſpel of the kingdome by *Iohn Baptiſt*, in his owne perſon, and by his Diſciples; but when he ſaw ſome of them maliciouſly obſtinate, then he propounded his *Doctrine unto them in parables*, that they might be hardened in ſinne: and after expounded the ſame privately to his Diſciples. The Diſciples likewiſe after the aſcention of Chriſt, preached ſtill unto the Jewes, even when they were perſecuted by them: but at length when as they ſaw that of obſtinate malice they oppugned the truth, *putting it from them, and judging themſelves unworthy eternall life, then they turned to the Gentiles*, Acts 13. 46.

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Matth. 13. 13.

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Now in this that hath beene ſaid, we may note two things: firſt, the long ſuffering and great patience of God, that will not have a ſinner living in the Church condemned, till he have brought him through all the meanes of his converſion, and till he he paſt hope. Thus he dealt with the *old World*, expecting their repentance, an *hundred and twentie years*, wherein he then called them by the preaching of *Noah*, Genes. 6. Secondly, hereby we muſt learne to moderate our judgements concerning wicked men: a man muſt not be condemned for a Dog, or for a Swine, till hee give evident ſigns of obſtinate malice, and wilfull contempt of the Word, and untill he doe even convict himſelfe to be ſuch an one, by a wilfull contempt of the meanes of his ſalvation. This gives us cleare their raſhneſſe and indiſcretion, that condemne our Church for no Church, and our people for no people of God: judging them for Dogges and Swine, when as they have not yet convicted them of obſtinate malice in ſinne or error. It will bee ſaid, they have admoniſhed them by writing. *I anſwer*, that their owne bookes have more errours in them, than they do hold whom they admoniſh, and ſo their writings can be no ſufficient conviction.

D

Secondly, here obſerve that men become *Dogges* and *Swine*, by their wilfull repelling that holy doctrine of God, which ſhould purge them and make them cleane. It is the naturall propertie of a Dogge to returne to his vomit, and of a Swine to his wallowing in the mire, as the Proverbe is; and hereof they can by no meanes be bereaved. And all men by nature returne to the vomit and filth of their ſinnes like Dogges and Swine: and they which will by no meanes ſuffer themſelves to bee drawne from their old ſinnes, they have theſe properties of Dogges and Swine: and looke as thoſe beaſts were excluded the Lords Tabernacle and Congregation under the Law; ſo are theſe men debarred from the Word and Sacraments, and all holy things under the Goſpel; they are abomination unto the Lord: ſee Pſal. 56. 6. and Pſal. 50. 16. In this regard we are to be admoniſhed, to ſuffer our ſelves to be cleanſed and reformed by the Word of God. *Ye are cleane* (ſaith Chriſt) *by the Word which I have ſpoken unto you*. John 15. 3. where he maketh the Word of God the inſtrument of our purification: to which effect he ſaith in his prayer to his Father, *Sanctifie them with thy truth, thy Word is truth*, John 17. 17. And Saint *Peter* ſaith, *our ſoules are purified in obeying the truth by the Spirit*, 1 Peter 1. 22. Now wee are by nature Dogges and Swine, inclined to the filth of our owne ſinnes, returning thereto with greedineſſe, neither can we of our ſelves be broken of this propertie, but when occaſion is offered we doe naturally runne to our old ſinnes, as the *Swine and Dogges doe to their filth and vomit*. In conſideration whereof, wee ought to ſubject our ſelves to the Word of God, labouring to ſee and feele our owne uncleanneſſe, and to crie with *David*, *Waſh me throughly from my ſinnes*: and with *Peter*, *Not my feet only, but my whole body*: that it may be ſaid of us, *We are cleane throughout by Chriſts word*. If we ſee any uncleanneſſe in our hearts or lives, we muſt purge it out by this Word, and returne no more to the filth of our former ſinnes. It is the propertie of Chriſts ſheepe to heare his voyce, and to obey the ſame: let us hereby teſtifie our ſelves to be his ſheepe, that ſo we may bee diſtinguiſhed from Dogges and Swine.

Here it may be demanded, whether we ſhould make confeſſion of our faith before Dogges and Swine. *Anſ.* Yes, if we be called thereunto, we are bound to doe it: *Be always ready*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you*, 1 Pet. 3. 15. And in this place our Saviour Chriſt ſpeaketh of the preaching and diſcutting of the word, as of a diſtinction. Now in preaching man acknowledge the Word to belong unto their ſoules, but in diſcuſſion they decline the word to belong unto themſelves alone.

Further

Further, here we are to consider divers points concerning *Excommunication*: First, the foundation thereof. *It is an ordinance of God*: for all Dogges and Swine by Christs commandement, must be kept from holy things: many that live in the Church, are open blasphemers of the name of Christ; some others are heretikes, and these likewise are to be barred from the Word and Sacraments; yea, a man living in the Church, may be worse in practice than an open enemie: of such like the Apostle speaketh, Titus 1.16. *They professe that they know God, but by their workes they deny him.* And such a one was *Ismael*, who for mocking *Isaac*, the sonne of the promise, *was cast out of Abrahams family*, that is, out of the Church of God, Genes. 21.10, 11. for *Abrahams* family at that time was Gods visible Church.

Secondly, here observe the *end of Excommunication*, namely, to preserve the holy things of God from pollution, contempt, and prophanation; even the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, which wilfull enemies would trample upon, as Swine will upon Pearles. And herein we may see the abuse of this ordinance, when it is used for politike and civill respects; especially in the Church of Rome, whereof it is made an instrument of the unjust deposing of Christian Princes, and of exempting their subjects from their due obedience and allegeance.

Thirdly, here our Saviour Christ noteth out the principall persons that are to execute this censure of the Church upon wilfull and obstinate enemies, that bee as Dogges and Swine; namely, they to whom the disposing and keeping of the holy things of God is committed, that is, the lawfull Ministers of the Word and Sacraments: for they must keepe those holy things pure which God hath committed unto them; but that they cannot doe without the exercise of this censure which God hath given unto his Church.

Fourthly, here also we may see, how farre this censure of the Church extendeth against obstinate and wilfull enemies: namely, to the debarring of them from the use of the Churches ministerie in the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments. Indeed if the partie be excommunicate for some particular crime, and there be hope of his repentance, because he doth not shew himselfe a Dogge or a Swine, by wilfull obstinacy in his sinne and contempt of the Church; then, although he be excluded from Communion with them in the Sacraments and Prayer, yet he may be admitted to the hearing of the Word, because that is a meanes to humble him for his sinne, and to bring him to repentance, which is the end of all Ecclesiasticall censures. And thus much of the *prohibition*: Now follow the *reasons* to inforce same.

Least they tread them under their feet, and turne again all to rent you. Here Christ reckeneth two reasons to enforce his prohibition, A both drawne from the dangerous events which would ensue by communicating holy things unto Dogges and Swine: for first, *they would tread them under their feet*: secondly, *turning again all to rent you.*

For the first: by *treading under feet*, he meanes, *prophaning and abusing*. Now because the holy things of God must not be prophaned and abused, therefore they must not be communicated unto wilfull enemies of the grace of God. 1 *Reason.*

In this reason see the singular *care* of our Saviour Christ, to keepe the Scriptures and other holy things of God from prophanation: This care he likewise shewed with great zeale, when *he whipt the buyers and sellers out of the Temple*, B because they made *his fathers house*, that holy place, *a house of Merchandise, and a denne of Theeves*, Matth. 21.12, 13. And herein he must be a patterne and example unto us all, to teach us care and zeale in keeping the holy things of God from prophanation: farre must it be from us to doe or speake any thing which may cause the world to speake evill of our holy profession. This is *Pauls* charge to servants, that they so carrie themselves towards their masters, *that the name of God, and his doctrine be not evill spoken of*, 1 Tim. 6.1. For want of care herein, was Gods hand heavie upon *David*, for *because by his foule falls of adulterie and murther, he had caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, therefore the childe borne unto him must surely die*, 2 Sam. 12.14. We must therefore *pray* (as the [a] Apostle bids us) *that the Word of God may be glorified.* This is Christs direction in his prayer, before all things to desire and seeke that [b] *Gods name may be hallowed and glorified*: Now Gods *Word* is his *Name*, for thereby is hee knowne unto us; yea, *his Name is magnified above all things by his Word*, Psal. 138.2. Excellent was *Davids* prayer to this effect, Psal. 119.39. *Take away my rebuke which I feare, for thy judgements are good*: that is, keepe mee from doing that which may bring rebuke or reproach upon thy Word, or upon thy workes, for they are good. Good King *Hezekias* is also commended for his care of Gods glory, in that he *forbad his servants to* D *answer to the raying blasphemies of Rabshakeh*, least thereby hee should be provoked to blasphemie the more: as also in that he greatly humbled himself before the Lord upon the hearing of it: for he *rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth, and spread the raying letter before the Lord*; thereby referring the revenge to God himselfe, Chap. 19.1.14.

The holy things of God must be kept from contempt.

a 2 Thes. 3.1.

b Matth. 6.9.

2 Kings 18.36

And turning again all to rent you. These words containe Christs second reason against communicating holy things to malitious and obstinate enemies, drawne from the perill that may ensue thereupon to his Disciples and Ministers: for these Dogges and Swine are not onely prone to abuse the holy things themselves, but also to annoy and hurt by reviling and persecution 2 *Reason.*

cution those that be the messengers of the word unto them.

Ministers must seeke to avoid persecution.

In this reason Christ sheweth, that it is not onely lawfull, but necessarie, that Gods Ministers should seeke to avoid and shun the malice and rage of obstinate enemies, by all lawfull meanes which may stand with Gods glory and the keeping of a good conscience. Hence he bade his Disciples, *with the innocence of Doves, yet the wisdome of Serpents*; now the serpent is most wily and warie to save her selfe from harme.

Matth. 10.16.

Object. But it is the properties of an *hireling, to flee from his flocke when he seeth the wolfe comming*: therefore it seemes Gods Ministers may not flie in time of persecution. *Ans.* To flie in persecution is not alwayes a forsaking of the flocke, but sometimes tends to their greater good: as when persecution is intended directly against the Minister, then he may with good conscience flie for his safetie, in hope of returne for their future good; else Christ would not have said to his disciples, *If they persecute you in one citie, flee into another*, Matth. 10.23. Yea, not onely the Minister must thus looke to his owne safetie, but his people also must doe what lies in them for his preservation. So did the beleevers in the Primitive Church for Saint *Paul*, *when his life was sought in Damascus, the Disciples let him down as a window in a basket thorow the wall, and he escaped*, Acts 9.25. And at *Ephesus*, when the great tumult was about *Diana*. *Paul would have thrust himselfe in among the people, but the Disciples seeing it would be dangerous unto him, kept him backe, and would not suffer him*, Acts 19.30.

John 10.12. Of flight in persecution.

V. 7 *Aske, and it shall be given you: seeke, and yee shall finde: knocke, and it shall be opened unto you.*

The eighth part of Christs Sermon

In this verse and those which follow unto the twelfth, is laid downe the third part of this chapter, concerning *prayer*: and it consisteth of two branches: a *commandement* to pray, and effectuall *reasons* to perswade us thereto. The commandement is propounded in three severall termes, *Aske, seeke, and knocke*: each whereof hath his promise annexed thereto, *Ye shall have, ye shall finde, and it shall be opened unto you.* Now for our better understanding of Christs meaning herein, two rules must be observed. 1. That Christ here speakes not of every kinde of asking in prayer, but of that onely which himselfe commandeth and alloweth: for we may aske and not receive, *because we aske amisse*, as S. *James* saith; but he that asketh, according to Christs direction in this place, shall receive.

1 Joh. 14.13.

Foure conditions in acceptable prayer.

Now in all acceptable prayer to God, foure conditions must be observed: 1. We must aske *while the time of grace and mercie remaineth*: for if the day of grace be once past, we may aske, seeke, and knocke, but all in vaine: this is A plaine by the *five foolish Virgins, who asked and sought for oyle, but found none, yea, they called and knocked, but it was not opened unto them*, Matth. 25.8, 9, 12. Now the time of this life, while God offers mercie unto us in his word, is *the acceptable time and the day of grace*, 2 Cor. 6.2. and therefore herein must we *aske, seeke, and knocke*. II. We must not aske as seemeth good unto our selves, but *according to Gods will*, and *as his word alloweth*. The sonnes of *Zebede* were denied their request, because they *asked they knew not what*, Matth. 20.22. But *this is our assurance that we have to him, that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us*, 1 John 5.14. III. We must aske in *faith*, that is *believe* that God will grant us those things which we aske according to his will: James 1.5, 6. If any man lacke wisdome, let him aske of God, -- *but let him aske in faith, and waver not: for the wavering minded man shall receive nothing of God*: thereof he saith Christ, *Whatsoever ye desire in prayer, believe that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you*, Marke 11.24. IV. We must referre the time and manner of Gods accomplishing our requests to his good pleasure. It was the sinne of the Israelites that they *limited the holy one of Israel*, by prescribing him what they would have for their provision, and when they would have it, Psal. 78.41. wee therefore must wait on God, as *David* did. Psal. 40.1. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined his eare unto me; and heard me.* God defers the granting of our requests, because he would trie the affections of his children. Cant. 2.1. The Church *seeketh Christ*, but cannot find him, that is, where and when she will. And indeed herein doe we shew forth faith, when we referre the time and manner of receiving our requests, to the good pleasure of God: *for he that beleeveth will not make hast*, Isay 28.16.

B

C

The second rule to be here remembered concerning prayer, is: That these promises are not made directly to the worke of prayer, but to the person that prayeth; and yet not to him simply, as he doth this good action of prayer, but as he is in Christ, for whose merit sake the promise is accomplished: and therefore Christ here speakes to them, whom he takes for granted D to be the true members of his mystical body, which is his Church. This rule must be remembred for the right understanding of the promises of God concerning prayer; for hereby it is plaine, that our prayer is not the cause of the blessings we receive from God, but onely a way and instrument in and by which God conveyeth his blessings unto his children; for a true prayer is a fruit of our faith in Christ, in whom alone *all the promises of God are yea, and amen*, that is, sure and certaine unto us.

2 *Rule.* Gods promise to hearre and respect the person in Christ.

Now having found Christs meaning, let us come to such instructions as are to be gathered hence. First, observe that Christ doth not barely propound this Commandement to pray, but repeats the same by a kinde of gra-

2. Godes fervent exercise prayer

dation in three distinct words, *Aske, seeke*, and *knocke*: whereof the latter imports more vehemence than the former. And this he doth to checke the slacknesse and coldnesse of our prayers, and to stirre us up to fervent zeale and diligence in this dutie, both in publike and private. And to move us to godly zeale and diligence in this dutie, consider the reasons following. *I. Christs owne example*, which in morall duties is a perfect rule: Now though he had little need to pray in respect of himselfe, for he did never sinne, yet how often, and how long, and with what fervencie did he give himselfe to this dutie? *he spent whole nights in prayer*, Luke 6.12. and *in prayer in the garden he sweat water and blood*. We have also *Moses* example, who spent *forte dayes, and forte nights in prayer and fasting for the people*, when they had sinned, Deut.9.18,19. If he were thus fervent in prayer for their sinnes, how earnest would he be for his owne? And *Daniel* humbled himselfe many dayes, and prayed fervently for his people, Dan. 9.2.4, &c. *David* prayed *seven times a day, and rose up at midnight to give thankes to God*, Psal. 119.164.62. And *Paul* willeth the Romans, that they would *strive* or *wrestle with him by prayer to God*, Rom.15.30. All these are worthy examples unto us; and if we compare our selves with them, we shall see we have much more cause so to doe: for our sinnes abound above theirs, and therefore we had need to pray for the preventing of Gods Judgements which our sinnes call for against us. Also we come farre short of them in grace, and therefore had need to pray for supply thereof against the time of need; for our dayes of peace will not always last, we have enjoyed it long, and therefore must looke for dayes of triall, for the state of Gods Church is interchangeable. *II. Reason.* All of us must come to deale with God, both in the day of death, and at the day of judgement; at both which times all worldly helps and comforts will forsake us, and by no meanes can we shun that account; therefore it will be good for us while we live, often to set our selves before the Lord, that so we may make our selves familiar and acquainted with him against that day: But if now we estrange our selves from God in regard of this exercise of prayer, then at our end we shall finde the Lord to be strange unto us, and to professe that hee *knowes us not*, which will be woe unto us. *III. Reason.* Every good thing wee have or stand in need of, comes from the mercie and bountie of God in Christ: and prayer is an ordinarie meanes for the procuring of Gods blessings; wee therefore must give our selves to the faithfull practice of this dutie. Indeed if grace and other blessings were our owne, or from our selves, wee might well spare this labour: *But what hast thou* (saith *Paul* to everie Christian) *that thou hast not received?* bee not therefore secure and idle: for Gods blessings come not when we snort upon our elbowes, but in the use

A of meanes; and happy are we that may use more meanes: for *in asking we receive, in seeking we finde, and in knocking it is opened unto us.*

Secondly, our Saviour Christ by trebling this commandement to pray, would give us to consider, that there is some weightie cause we should be instant in this dutie; and that is, in regard of the great miseries, and manifold dangers where unto we are subject in this life: for as *Peter* saith, *the righteous shall hardly be saved*, and no marvell, for we have *without us*, the devill and all his angels plotting our destruction, and the World a dangerous enemie, whereby the devill workes: *within us*, we have our owne corrupt hearts, daily drawing us to the practice of sinne, the bane and poyson of our soules. Now what is to be done in this case? surely our onely refuge, is constant and fervent prayer unto God, as Christ here implies by this threefold command: for *in all things we must let our requests be made knowne to God*, Philip.4.6. This hath alwayes beene the practice of all the faithfull, as we may see in Gods Booke. But if we had no example, this commandement were sufficient, to persuade us unto this dutie. Also doest thou want any grace of God, as faith, repentance, knowledge, zeale, patience, strength against temptation, or assurance of Gods favour? why, *aske, and thou shalt have; seeke, and thou shalt finde.* And this must be our course in outward wants, and for temporall blessings, as health, peace, libertie, plentie, &c. Indeed the

C wicked worldlings seeke to wise men, and wise women in their miseries, but this is to forsake God, and to goe to the Devill: *Gods people must goe to their God*, Hay 8.19.

Thirdly, the trebling of this commandement in diverse termes must teach us, to be instant and urgent with God in prayer: this is an holy and acceptable importunitie, when the Christian heart gives God no rest: Jeremi.29.12,13. the Lord promisseth to his people, *That they shall crie unto him, and goe and pray unto him, and he will heare them: they shall seeke him, and finde him, because they shall seeke him with their whole heart.* Hay 62.7. *The Lords remembrancers are commanded not to keepe silence, nor to give the Lord any rest.* Matth.15.22. *The woman of Canaan is commended, because she will take no an-*

D *swer*, nor repulse from our Saviour Christ, till her daughter was cured: and Luke 18.5. *The poore widdow by her importunitie prevailed with the unrighteous Judge*: which parable Christ propounds, to teach us to be constant and earnest in prayer. We therefore must shake off our naturall coldnesse and negligence in prayer, which is the common sin of the world in regard of this dutie. And we must labour for knowledge both of our owne sinnes and miseries, and of Gods mercies, that so we may pray with understanding, and in zeale and fervencie as Christ here requireth. Alas many pray not at all, and others know not what they aske, though they say the Lords prayer, or some other set forme of prayer.

And

Matth. 7. vers. 7.

Causes why we should be fervent in prayer.

1 Peter 4.18.

This last is not here urged.

2 Cor. 12.4.

Revel. 3.17.

Rom. 7.24.

God wishes to wee himselfe first come from his enemies.

Reasons of the commandement to pray.

And most men that have knowledge suffer their minides to wander from God by vaine imaginations: now all comes for lacke of that feeling in prayer, which Christ here requireth.

This much of the Commande in generall. Now out of the words more particularly we may observe two points: First, where Christ bids us *Aske, seeke, knocke*, he speakes not particularly to some, but generally to all his servants, so that all must pray; which plainely implies that his best and dearest servants are during this life in want of some grace or blessing. And indeed when God gives most excellent gifts and blessings to his children, yet then hee leaves them in some notable want or triall for their humiliation and provocation to prayer. *Paul was taken up into Paradise, and there heard words that cannot possibly be uttered by man in this life*: this was a great grace and prerogative: but yet to humble him, *lest he should be exalted out of measure, there was given him a pricke in the flesh the messenger of Satan to buffet him*: hereby he was brought to pray most earnestly for deliverance, but yet he must *rest contented with Gods grace; for God will make perfect his power through the weaknesse of his servants*, vers.8,9. This point must bee observed, to dissover to many secure persons their miserable state, who feele no want of grace in themselves, and therefore thinke all is well. But what meanest thou to professe Christ if thou have no need of him nor of his graces? Oh know it, when thou sayest in thine owne heart, *thou art rich, and lackest nothing*; then *thou art poore, and blinde, and miserable, and wretched.* And indeed if thou knewest the corruption of thine owne heart, thou wouldest crie out with the Apostle, in respect of thy wants; *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!*

Secondly, Christ saying not onely *Aske*, but *seeke*, and *knocke*; doth hereby imply what is Gods dealing many times with his owne servants: namely, that he forsakes them for a time, and in part, and in some sort hides himselfe, and as it were lockes himselfe from them. Now thus he dealeth for two causes: First, hereby to chastise and correct them for their sinnes: *for iniquitie separates betweene God and his people, and their sinnes hide his face from them*, Hay 59.2. Secondly, to make triall of his graces in his children, to see whether they delight in his love, to shew them their owne weaknesse, and to move them to cleave unto him more inseparably. By all which we see, it stands us in hand to pray earnestly and continually, for God may forsake us for our sinnes: and he may justly take occasion to trie what we have profited by his Gospel, which we have long enjoyed with abundance of peace.

Thus much of the commandement to earnest prayer: Now Christ inforceth it by two reasons. First, by a *promise*, infolded in this verse with the commandement, and confirmed in the next. Secondly, by a comparison, vers.9. For the first,

A The reason from the *promise* in this verse may thus be framed:

If they which aske, shall receive; if those that seeke, shall finde; and those that knocke, shall be let in: then doe you aske, seeke, and knocke:

But they that aske, shall receive; those that seeke, shall finde; &c. Therefore doe you aske, seeke, and knocke.

In this reason our Saviour Christ teacheth us, that when we pray to God, we must bring a speciall faith whereby we are assured that the particular things we aske according to Gods will shall be given us. So faith Christ, Marke 11.24. *Whatsoever ye aske in prayer, believe that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you*: and James 1.6. *Let him aske in faith*: for he that doubteth of Gods promise, derogateth his Office of the thing he asketh. Now if we must bring this speciall faith, then of necessitie must wee have a speciall knowledge of the will and promise of God for the things we aske: for as without faith wee cannot pray aright, so without knowledge, no faith. And therefore we must B be carefull to acquaint our selves with the will and promise of God, that by Gods commandement we may know what to aske, and by faith may also aske in assurance: for if we pray without this knowledge and faith, our prayers are but lip-labour and unprofitable.

Secondly, hence we learne that the Papists erre grossly, which teach that this speciall faith is not necessary in prayer; this is a doctrine of C Devils: for we ought to bring in prayer a particular faith to apply to our selves the promise of God concerning that thing which we aske in prayer. But this we can never bring, unlesse we first have a speciall saving faith, whereby we believe our reconciliation with God in Christ: for therefore doe we believe that God will grant our particular requests, because by faith we know our selves to be in Christ, in whom he loveth us; and therefore will make good his promise unto us, as the Apostle saith, *This is the assurance that we have in* Christ, *that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us.*

Thirdly, hence we learne how to carry our selves in all dangers, troubles, and afflictions; namely, we must settle our hearts by faith upon D the promise of God, who hath said *he will not forsake us, but be with us in trouble, and deliver us*, Psal.92.15. This is necessary, for without faith in great afflictions, our owne naturall passions will confound us: Hence *Habakuk*, speaking of grievous times of affliction, saith, *The just shall live by faith.* And this *David* testified, Psal.62.1. *Yet my soule keepeth silence unto God: of him commeth my salvation.* Psal. 23.3. *Though I should walke through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare none evill: for thou* (Lord) *art with me, thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me.*

Fourthly, this must stirre us up to great diligence in prayer. We being Gods creatures, and our God requiring this service at our hands,

ought

A speciall faith required in prayer.

Rhem. on Jac. 5.6. Bellar. de justitia 3. c.

1 John 5.14.

Habakuk 2.4.

Amos 6.1. Habak. 1.13. &c.

ought to pray upon his commandement, though he had made no promise unto us. But now sith he hath made a gracious promise to heare and grant our requests, this must stir us up to all diligence, and alacritie in prayer: see the practice hereof in *David*, upon Gods promise he incourageth himselfe to pray, 2 Sam. 7.27, 28, 29. *Thou, O Lord of hosts, hast revealed unto thy servant, that thou wilt build him an house: Therefore now O Lord God (for thou art God, and thy words are true, and thou hast told this goodnesse unto thy servant:) Therefore now let it please thee to blesse the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever: for thou O Lord God hast spoken it.* So *Daniel* perceiving by the prophecie of *Ieremie*, the *promise of God for the returne of the people from the captivitie*, doth set himselfe to most earnest prayer to God, for the accomplishment of that promise, Daniel 9.2, 3. And so must we doe in all our wants, first learch out Gods promise for the supply thereof, and then goe boldly and diligently to God by prayer in the name of Christ.

A benefit onely, which God oft gives to Hypocrites; but for spiritual! blessings which pertaine to salvation in Christ, whereof this Text is principally to be understood, they are not granted to the wicked.

Gods truth.

B

III. Objecti. *Abraham* prayed directly against the will of God, for *the saving of Sodom*, which God was purposed to destroy. *Answ.* *Abraham* no doubt had in him a speciall motion to make that prayer, and withall he asked leave of God to pray for them; neither did he pray absolutely, but with submission to Gods will, and so he sinned not, though he obtained not his desire: otherwise, without these cautions hee had done amisse: and we must not make the extraordinary practices of the faithfull, ordinary rules for our imitation. So that Gods promise here is firme, whosoever asketh those blessings of God which he hath promised to give, in that manner which God approveth, shall bee sure to receive.

God is readie to heare.

The use. In this reason we learne, that God is most ready and willing to heare his children when they pray: Isay 65.1. *I was found of them that sought me not, I said behold me, behold me,* to a Nation *that called not upon my Name*: and vers. 24. *Before they call I will answer, and while they speake I will heare.*

Vse. Our God the onely true God.

This then is first a plaine proofe that the Lord whom we worship, is the true God; because he is so able to helpe, and so ready and willing to heare, being neere to all that call upon him in truth. Thus *Moses* reasoneth with his people to prove that they onely had the true God for their God: Deut. 4.7. *What Nation is so great unto whom the gods comes so neere unto them, as the Lord our God is neere unto us in all that we call unto him for.*

C

A motive to love God.

Secondly, this must perswade us to love God unfeinedly and heartily, who is so ready and willing to grant our requests in prayer, specially considering we are by nature his enemies. A rare thing it is to see any resemblance of it in the world; and indeed among men this dealing is able to draw love from an enemie, when we shew our selves willing to doe him any good we can: this heaps coales of fire upon his head, to consume his malice, and kindle in him love to us: Oh then, how should Gods gracious bountie and readinesse to heare us, draw our hearts to God in all love and thankfulnesse?

D

A comfort to the afflicted.

Thirdly, this serves to be a notable stay and comfort to all those that are cast downe in soule with the sight and burthen of their sinnes: for behold, if they aske mercie at Gods hands, they shall have it; if they can call, hee will heare; and if they will but knocke at the doore of his mercie, he is ready to open unto them. Here they use to plead, that they have long called, and cried, and knocked, but they finde no comfort. *Answ.* O consider the usuall dealing of God with his owne children: for a time he will hide his face, and seeme to locke up his mercie and compassion from them, as we may

V. 8 *For whosoever asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.*

Here Christ confirmeth the former reason that was included in the former verse with the commandement to pray. In effect and substance they are all one; onely here the reason is propounded more generally, without limitation to Christs hearers, thus; *Whosoever asketh, receiveth; whosoever seeketh, findeth, &c.* that is, observing the due conditions of prayer, which Gods Word requireth.

I. Objecti. Here some may sey, that God oft heares those that pray without faith; as *the cries of the poore, when they cryse their oppressours*, Exo. 22.23. And so the Lord heard the *Israelites when they asked Quailes in their lust*, Psal. 78. 18, 27. *Answ.* True it is, God sometimes grants the requests of those that pray without faith, but his hearing is not in mercie, but in anger and wrath, and is a meanes to execute his judgement upon them. Thus he *gave the Israelites a King in his wrath*, Hosea 13.11. and so he gave them *Quailes, for while the meat was in their mouthes, the wrath of God came upon them*. Psal. 78.30, 31. Thus the *Devils* had their request granted, *to enter into the herd of Swine*, Matth. 8.31, 32. and so God permitted him to afflict *Iob*, Iob 1.12. but all was to his owne shame, to manifest his absolute subjection unto God, that beyond his will he cannot goe, no not to hurt the basest of Gods creatures.

II. Objecti. *Ahab* prayed and humbled himselfe and was heard, though hee did it onely hypocritically, for feare of punishment, 1 Kings 21.29. *Answ.* This was a grant of a temporall

may see by *Davids* complaint, Psal. 77.7. *Will the Lord absent himselfe for ever, and will he shew no more favour?* vers. 8. *Is his mercie clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?* vers. 9. *Hath God forgotten to be merciefull, &c?* But his intent herein is to humble them deeper, to make them knocke more carnestly, that they may be more thankfull for Gods mercy when they findeit; and more carefull to keepe themselves from sinne, whereby they may lose againe that assurance. Indee! it is a most heavie crosse, and the deepest griefe that can befall a man, to have the conscience apprehend the wrath of God without any feeling of his favour: yet in this case here is comfort, let this poore soule out of the *depth of his horrour crye unto God* with *David*, and out of the *belly of the Whale* of desperation with *Ionas*, endeavouring against all feeling to lay hold upon the promise of mercie in Christ, and he shall finde the Lord in due time ready to heare and to send comfort, yea, the sweetnesse of his love shall distill most joyfully into his poore soule.

A

B

V. 9 *For what man is there among you, which if his sonne, aske him bread, would give him a stone?*

10 *Or if he aske him fish, will he give him a serpent?*

11 *If yee then, which are evill, can give to your children good gifts, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that aske him?*

C

These words containe a second reason of the former commandement to pray, as also a confirmation of the promise annexed thereunto for assurance to be heard; and it may be framed thus:

If earthly parents though they be evill, can give good gifts to their children, when they want them, and aske them at their hands; then much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those that aske him:

But earthly parents, though they be evill, will give good gifts to their children:

Therefore much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that aske him.

This reason standeth in a comparison of unequals, drawne from the lesse to the greater; from the care which is ordinarily seene in naturall parents over their children, to prove undoubtedly the much tender care of our heavenly Father over us. And this kinde of reasoning is usuall with God in Scripture: Heb. 9.13, 15. *Can a woman forget her childe, and not have compassion on the sonne of her wombe? Though they should forget, yet will I not forget thee.* Psal. 103.13. *As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him.* Mal. 3.17. --- *and I will spare them as a man spareth his owne sonne that serveth him.*

D

A strong grounde of persuasion.

In the framing of this reason, behold a speciall favour of God vouchsafed to godly parents: They may take a taste of Gods love and care over themselves, by the consideration of that naturall care and tender affection they beare towards their owne children. And indeed they may more easily than other, apprehend and apply to themselves the loving favour and tender care of God over them, by the like affections in themselves towards their owne children. Now this favour and privilege God vouchsafeth for speciall cause: First, to incite and stirre up those parents, which yet have not tasted of Gods love, to embrace his Word and promises whereby God reveales his Love to men, that so they may taste of Gods love towards them, whereof they have in notable a patterne in their affection towards their owne children. Secondly, to provoke them to labour to have their hearts rooted and grounded in the love of God. And thirdly, that they having experience of Gods love in themselves, may bring their children and posteritie to the fruition of the same love and mercie.

Now to come to the comparison: The first part whereof is this, that it is a *naturall properties in all parents to give good things unto their children.* This is a principle binding conscience, that parents should bee carefull of their children; *He that provideth not for his owne*, (saith the Apostle) *especially for them of his family, is worse than an infidell*: for infidels do not put out this light of nature, but provide for their children.

1 Tim. 5. 8.

Riotous parents reprehended.

Here then those parents are to be blamed, who spend their substance in gaming and riot, and so leave their children and family destitute and in want. These spend upon their owne lusts, those good things which they should bestow upon their children, and so shew themselves unnaturall; but the Magistrate, as he is the publike father, ought to looke unto them, and to restraine them from such disorder.

All sinfull sensualitie is a direct violence to nature.

Secondly, here those evill parents are to be blamed, which for food and raiment will provide and give sufficient to their children, but in the meane while they give them not godly education, in the *instruction and information of the Lord*, which is a good thing indeed unto the soule: for which the godly in Scripture are commended; as *Abraham* towards his family, Genesis 18.19. and *Lois* and *Eunice* towards *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 1.5. who brought him up in *faith unfeined.*

Godly

Thirdly, by this we may see the state of those that kill their owne children, (for so we may read, that some parents have eaten their owne children) namely, they are such as become unnaturall, being in Gods just judgement left unto themselves to be ruled by the Devill, who filleth their hearts with this unnaturall and savage crueltie. Now Christ speakes here of the light of nature not extinguished, and so it is true even among the heathen.

v. 11 *If ye then which are evill, &c.* Here is the application of the comparison, the ground whereof was said downe in the two former verses. And *by evill* he meanes not every sinner, but such as are stained with malice, envie, and selfe-love, being bent to seeke their owne good onely: for so finde the *Master* to the envious *labourers*, Matth. 20.15. *Is thine eye evill because I am good?* that is, art thou envious because I am bountifull?

In these words Christ gives us to understand, that it is the note of an evill man to be given wholly to seeke his owne good, though otherwise he live civilly: for this is a fruit of evill covetousnesse and selfe-love. Experience shewes the grievousnesse of this sinne: for thence come the manifold practices of injustice, cruelties, and oppression that be in the world, hence it is that times of dearth are made more heavie upon the poore, than otherwayes Gods hand hath sent them; because the rich seeke their owne good and commodity onely at such times: hence come ingrossing, deceiving, and inclosing to the spoile of the poore. We must therefore beware of this sinfull practice; and on the otherside give our selves to practise goodnesse towards others, fitting our selves to the *practice of love, which seeketh not her owne things, but is bountifull*, that so wee may shew forth our love to God by well-doing to our brethren; as the Apostle bids us, Galat. 5.13. *Doe service one to another by love*; and Philip. 2.4. *Looke not every man on his owne things, but every man also on the things of other men.* This was good King *Iosias* his practice, for which cause among many particular vertues, all his *goodnesses* are said to be recorded, 2 Chron. 35.26. And Saint *Paul* like wise *became all things to all men, that he might win some; and though he were free from all men, yet he made himselfe servant unto all men, that he might win the more*, 1 Cor. 9.19. --- 22.

You that are evill can give good gifts: that is, *bread, fish*, and such like, as Luke 11.11, 12. Here it is plaine, that an evill *man* may *have some kinde* of vertues in him, whereby he may doe some good workes. *Quest.* How can this be, for an evill man wants faith, and so whatsoever he doth is sinne? *Ans.* We must know, that the gifts of the Spirit are of two sorts: some are *common*, whereby the corruption of mans nature is onely restrained and limited, for the maintaining of civill societies, that man with man may live in some order and quietnesse: And hence it was that among the heathen, some were just, some mild, some liberall, &c. All these came from the Spirit, yet not reaching the parties, but onely restraining their naturall wickednesse: And of this sort of gifts is the love and care of parents towards their children, and the love of children towards their parents. And these and such like evill men may have, for they are not sanctifying vertues, but rather shadowes thereof. The second kinde of the gifts of the Spirit are more *speciall gifts & graces*, whereby the corruption of mans nature is mortified and in some part abolished, and the graces of Gods image are renued in man, whereby they become loving, meeke, just, temperate, &c. which in the regenerate are true Christian vertues, and the exercise hereof is the doing of good works indeed.

How much more shall your heavenly father give good things to them that aske him? These words containe the second part of the comparison, wherein Christ doth amplifie and set out the bountifulnesse of God in his gifts to his children: and S. *Luke* specifieth these good things, to be *the gift of the holy Ghost*, in regard of grace and operation.

Here then three points are to be handled; I. Who gives these good things. II. What is given. III. To whom. For the first: the *Author* of these good things is the *Father*: for of him, and from him, commeth every good gift, and every perfect giving. *Quest.* But this gift is the holy Ghost, now the holy Ghost is God, how then can he be given, this seemes to imply inequalitie in the Trinitie, for the person giving, must have power and authoritie over the person given? *Answ.* We must know, first, that this action of the Father in giving the holy Ghost, is not by vertue of superiour power and authoritie, but by consent; the holy Ghost is freely willing to be given of the Father; for all three persons being one and the same God, must needs have one and the same will, as in all things, so in this gift. Secondly, this giving is not in essence or person, but in regard of operation and grace; as love, joy, peace, &c. in the hearts of Gods children.

II. Point. What are these good things given? *Answ. The holy Ghost. Quest.* Why should the Father give the holy Ghost, and not the holy Ghost as well give the Father, seeing they are equall? *Ans.* The reason is, because of that order which the divine wisdome manifesteth in the Trinitie; for though all three persons be equall in all properties of the godhead, which is one and the same in them all; yet they are distinct in order, the Father being the first person, the Sonne not the first, but the second; and the holy Ghost not the first person, nor the second, but the third: and hence it is, that the Father gives the sonne, both the father and the sonne give the holy Ghost; yet not in person, but in regard of gifts and operation, and that by free and equall consent, not from superioritie, or by constraint.

III. Point.

Matth. 7. vers. 11.

Luke 11. 13.

How the Father gives the holy Ghost.

Matth. 7. vers. 11.

III. Point. To whom doth the Father give this gift of the holy Ghost? *Answ. To them that aske him.* Hence some would gather that man hath free will by nature in his conversion, because he must first aske, and then comes the gift of the holy Ghost. *Answ.* We must know that by the *holy Ghost* here is meant, not the beginning of grace, but the increase thereof, and a greater measure of gifts, with a more sensible feeling of them: for this promise is made to Gods children that aske, which none can be, but by the holy Ghost. See this in the Disciples, John 20.22. *Christ* said to his Disciples, who had true grace before, *Receive ye the holy Ghost*: and yet also after that, *the holy Ghost came downe upon them in the forme of cloven tongues of fire*, Acts 2.2. Now these latter givings, were in regard of greater measure, as it is said, *they were filled with the holy Ghost*, v. 3. Againe, by *them that aske*, is not meant every one that utereth words of request to God; but those that aske in faith, and pray aright by grace: as Rom. 10.14. *How can they call on him, in whom they have not beleeved?* and Rom. 8.26. *We know not what to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities -- and maketh request for the Saints according to the will of God*, vers. 27.

Pelagian. vide August. l. 4. in Iulian. cap. 8.

Vse. 1. Hence we learne, that grace is given not to the idle, but to them that use the good meanes ordained of God for the obtaining of grace; as the holy exercises of the Word, in hearing, reading, meditation, and humble and earnest prayer: and therefore, if we would have grace, we must diligently exercise our selves in these meanes; for *faith comes by hearing*, Rom. 10.17. And Gods children in all ages have used the meanes to get grace: Lament. 5.21. *Turne thou us, O Lord, unto thee, and we shall be turned*; and *David* is plentifull in the meanes, whereby hee abounded in grace: Psal. 119.32. *Teach me, Lord, the way of thy Statutes*: and verse 99. *I have had more understanding than all my Teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation.* So Christs Disciples did not onely heare him preach, but desired to be instructed in those things which they knew not: Matth. 13.36. *Declare to us the meaning of the parable*: also they *prayed him to increase their faith*, Luke 17.5. Here then we may see the cause of that ignorance and want of grace which abounds in the world: namely, contempt or negligence in the meanes which God hath ordained for the obtaining of grace: for the heart of the negligent is like the *field of the sluggard*, that hath no corne in it, but *is over-growne with bryers and thornes.*

How to get grace.

Prov. 24. 30. 31.

Secondly, this serves for the comfort of those that have as yet but the beginnings of grace, in small and weake measure; they must not be discouraged, for God hath plenty of grace in store: if they can but finde and feele their want of grace, and lament it unto God, using the meanes of the Word and prayer to get supply; here is a promise of the holy Ghost, who is the store-house and fountaine of all grace.

A comfort to the weake in grace.

Thirdly, this serves for a good ground to confute sundry errours; as first, the opinion of universall grace, whereby some hold, that every man may be saved if he will; for the promise of the holy Ghost (without which none can be saved) is not universall, but here made with restraint to those that aske according to Gods wil, which none can doe without the Spirit; which must teach us to pray in faith, without which we receive nothing from God, Iam. 1.7. Secondly, this overthroweth the fond conceit of Anabaptists, and Familists, which looke for the Spirit by revelation, and not in the exercise of the Word and prayer. But we must looke to the meanes, in which God gives the Spirit; and out of that meanes, we are more subject to the delusions of Satan, than to the operation of the holy Ghost. Thirdly, this also confuteth the errour of the Church of Rome, who teach, that a man *by the good use of the gifts of nature, may come to obtaine the gifts of the holy Ghost.* But there is no larger promise than this is in all the Scripture, where the gifts of the holy Ghost are promised to the exercise of the gift of prayer in faith; which we cannot doe by nature but by grace. And besides, when we aske in faith by grace, this is no cause of the gifts of the Spirit which we receive, but onely a discharge of our duties in the exercise of the meanes which God hath appointed; whereupon followeth the increase of grace, yet no way of our merit, but from Gods free mercie and his bountie.

Vniversall grace confuted.

Anabaptists, and Familists.

Aquin. 1. 2 q. 112. art. 3.

v. 12 *Therefore whatsoever ye would that men should doe to you, even so doe ye to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

This verse containes the fourth part of this Chapter, concerning *equitie* and *justice*. And it consists of two branches; a commandement, *Whatsoever ye would, &c.* and a reason, *for this is the Law and the Prophets.* For the first: *The meaning.* The commandement is propounded in a forme of speech that hath reference to some thing going before; *Therefore whatsoever, &c.* and yet it seemeth very hard, that it should depend either upon the doctrine of *prayer*, or of *dispensing* the word, or of *rash judgements.* Why then is it said *therefore, &c?* Some thinke it is to be referred to the doctrine of Justice, which was delivered in the fifth Chapter, but that is scarce probable, because so many different points of Doctrine are handled betweene. Others thinke that it doth not depend of any thing that went before, but that the Word (*therefore*) doth abound; and this is more probable, for such particles doe sometimes abound: John 1.20. *He denied and said*, because * *I am not the Christ*: where the word (*because*) doth abound. Now though

The ninth part of Christs Sermon.

Ibid.

* Iohn 1. 20.

Matth. 7. vers. 12.

though the word *therefore* doe abound, yet it is not without his use, for it imports that the doctrine here delivered is a speciall doctrine, and a maine conclusion inferred upon divers particular duties of Justice before delivered in the whole Sermon.

Whatsoever.] It may seeme that this ought not to be so, for many desire and wish evill unto themselves; as children, that they may have their wills to take their pleasure, and not be held in subjection unto their parents, or held to good education: and so idle persons wish evill unto themselves, for they would not be set a-worke. We are therefore to know that this must not bee understood of evill wishes, but of a will and desire well ordered, either by grace, and according to the written Word; or at least, by the light of natural knowledge, and conscience: so that Christs meaning is this; as if he had said, *Whatsoever thing, either by the light of nature, and conscience, or by direction from Gods Word, you would wish that men should doe to you, that doe ye unto them.*

The commandement thus explained, containeth two things; I. The thing to be ruled and ordered: namely, *our actions to other men:* II. The rule it selfe that must order all our sayings and doings towards others; to wit, that desire of justice and equitie, which every man by nature would have others shew to him in all things.

In this commandement our Saviour Christ would let us see a notable properties of our corrupt nature; namely, that we are forward and diligent to exact justice and equitie at other mens hands towards us, but slacke and backeward to yeeld the same to others againe. In other mens dealings towards our selves, we are mastereable to teach them what they ought to doe; but in our owne dealings toward others, wee are stoice schollers that will learne their duties: we our selves would be reverenced and commended, but wee hardly doe the like to others.

Secondly, here wee are taught to avoid all practices, whereby we might hurt our neighbour, either in body, goods, or good name; as lying, slandering, usurie, oppression, and such like: this naturall reason might teach us, for wouldest not thou have others to defame, hurt, or oppresse thee? then doe not this to them: for the rule is not, doe as men doe to thee, but *doe to others, as thou wouldest have them doe to thee:* and it is the corruption of nature, that moves men to seeke their owne advantage and preferment, by the losse and debasing of others.

Thirdly, here we learne, that in common injuries wherein we are wronged by others, we must not requite like for like; but doe good for evill: we must not looke at that which they doe to us, but at that which we would they should doe.

Fourthly, hence we learne, that in matters of commoditie whereabout we deale in the world, we must not onely looke unto our selves, but also seeke the good of our neighbours: it is the manner of men to seeke themselves onely in their affaires, and each man will sell as deere as he can, according to the proverbe, *Every man for himselfe, and God for us all:* but neither the saying, nor the practice is from God; he would have us according to the law of Nature, to seeke the common good, and to doe as we would be done unto.

Matth. 7. vers. 12.

Men seeke for their dealings owne.

Fifthly, this rule of equitie cuts the throat of all those pretences, whereby bad dealing is smoothed over in the world; for ill minded persons use to colour their doings with these and such like sayings: the gripple seller saith, *The thing is mine, may I not make of mine owne what I can:* the deceiver saith, *he thrusts his ware on no man:* the usurer saith, *he bids no man hire his money, but others intreat it of him,* and give him thankes; but these pretences are nought, these men follow a crooked line, they ought to see in their owne hearts, whether they would have other men deale so with them: the usurer may pretend he pleasures the poore, but his helpe is no better than his is, that gives a draught of cold water to him that is in a burning feaver, which seemes pleasant at the first, but after turnes to his great annoyance.

How to get love.

Sixthly, would we have all men to shew forth their love unto us? we then must be as carefull to shew forth our love to others, by the practice of all good duties. This is against our nature, but yet being the commandement of Christ, wee must endevour our selves to obey the same.

How to keepe a good conscience.

Lastly, here we have direction how to keepe a good conscience, in all our dealings with men in the world; *for such things as are expressed in the word, we must follow the direction thereof:* but where we want a particular commandement, *there we must order our actions by this generall rule:* enter into thy conscience, and there search *how thou wouldest have other men deale with thee, and follow that in thy dealings with them:* and so shalt thou keepe a good conscience. For want of this, come so many disorders as are in the world; and therefore happie were our times, if men would doe as they would be done to. Thus much for the commandement, now followes the reason.

The reason.

For this is the Law and the Prophets.] *The meaning:* By the *Law* we must understand the *five bookes of Moses*, which were the first Scripture that ever was written: so Luke the 16.31. *They have Moses and the Prophets.* By the *Prophets* we must understand, *all the rest of the bookes of the Old Testament, besides the five bookes of Moses*, the *Prophets* being put for the *bookes of the Prophets:* as Matth. 2. 23. *It is written in the Prophets that he shall be called a Nazarite:* which testimonie is taken out of the booke of Judges, and it sheweth that the booke of Judges is to be numbred among the bookes of the Prophets: & they are called the Prophets, because

Matth. 7. vers. 12.

because they were written by some Prophet. And here this commandement touching Justice is called *the Law and the Prophets*, because it is the summe of the Law and Prophets. Yet some may aske how this can be true, seeing this commandement only concerneth things to be practised; and the Law and Prophets besides moral duties, containe matters of faith to be believed? I answer, this commandement must be understood to be the summe of the Law and the Prophets, not for all things, but for that which they prescribe touching this point of justice and equitie, and the practise thereof. *To doe as they would be done to,* is the fulfilling of that which is set downe in the Law and in the Prophets, touching equitie in all humane actions. Now the meaning being thus opened, the reason standeth thus, being drawne from divine Testimonie:

That which is the summe of the Law and of the Prophets touching equitie, must be done:

But to doe as we would be done to, is the summe of the Law and the Prophets: therefore we must so doe.

How to know the Scripture of the old Testament.

From this reason wee may gather a rule whereby to judge concerning the old Testament, what is Scripture, and what is not: all Scripture of the old Testament, is either *the Law*, or *the Prophets*; that is, was either penned by *Moses*, or by *some of the Prophets*, who were extraordinarily moved and enabled thereunto. And therefore all the bookes from Genesis to Malachi are Canonicall Scripture, because they are written by some of the Prophets. To this purpose Saint *Peter* saith, 2 Peter 1.19. *We have a most sure word of the Prophets, &c.* But for the bookes of *Apocrypha*, they are not Canonicall Scripture, because they were not penned by *Moses* or any of the *Prophets*: which is plaine by this, that all of them were first written either in Latine, or in Greeke, and none in Hebrew originally; whereas all the old Prophets sent from God, writ their bookes in the Hebrew, in the language of that people to whom they were sent; save onely that some part of *Daniel*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah* were in Chalde, which language the people learned in the captivitie. Secondly, the Prophets could not erre, either in judgement, memorie, or understanding, by reason of the immediate assistance of the holy Ghost: as Acts 15.28. *It seemed good to the holy Ghost, and to us:* and *Peter* calls their word *most sure.* But the Authors of the bookes of *Apocrypha* erred, as may be shewed in them all; Tobit 6. *Raphaels* counsell for driving away the Devill by the smell of the liver of a fish, is a meere fabulous device; for the Devill is by nature a spirit, and cannot bee affected with such things. The storie of *Judith* is fabulous, which saith, *Nebuchadnezzar* was King of Assyria when the people returned from the captivitie, and *Joakim* was high Priest. In the addition to *Hester*, Chapter 16.11. *Haman is said to be a man of Macedonia*; but the true Scripture saith, *he was an Agagite, comming of Agag.* The Author Ecclesiasticus confesseth his inabilitie in writing these things; but the true Prophets were all sufficient to this worke, and free from errour by the immediate assistance of the holy Ghost. And Chapter 46. 12. that Author writeth, that *Samuel* prophesied after his death, and shewed unto *Saul* his death: but the true storie Canonicall saith, *God had forsaken Saul, and would answer him, neither by dreames, nor Urim, nor by Prophets,* 1 Sam. 28.6. The booke of Maccabees commendeth one for killing himselfe, which is the most cruell and dangerous murther that can be; and the Author also excuseth his insufficiencie in penning of it, which beseemeth not him that is guided by Gods Spirit. In the Song of the three children it is said, *the flame ascended nine and forte cubits above the Furnace;* which seemes incredible, especially that still they should then cast in fuell, or approach so neere, as to put any man into it. Likewise in the storie of *Susanna* it is said, verse 45. that *Daniel* was a young childe when he executed judgement upon the two false witnesses, which was in the end of *Astiages* reigne, immediately before the reigne of *Cyrus*: and verse 64. *Daniel* by this meanes is said to grow famous: which cannot possibly accord with the true storie of *Daniel*, neither for his age, nor for his fame and reputation. And the like may be said of the rest; whereby it is plaine, these bookes cannot be Canonicall Scripture. And yet they are not to be rejected, but reverently esteemed of, as the bookes of worthy men.

Apocrypha bookes not Canonicall.

Ecclus. 6.

Here some may say, If *Moses* and the Prophets comprehend all Scripture that hath divine Testimonie, then the bookes of the new Testament shall not be Scripture, because they were not written by the Prophets. *Ans.* They were either penned by the Apostles, or by other Apostolike men, and allowed by the Apostles: as Saint *Lukes Gospel*, and the *Acts*, were written by *Luke* a Physitian; and Saint *Marke* that writ that Gospel, was not an Apostle; yet those bookes were approved by Apostolike authoritie, which is all one as if they had beene written by the Apostles; and the Apostles in speaking and writing were of equall authoritie with the Prophets, having the infallible assistance of the holy Ghost, as well as the Prophets: for Acts 15.28. they say, *It seemeth good to the holy Ghost, and to us;* and Ephes. 2.20. the *Church* is said *to be built on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles;* where the Apostles are made equall with the Prophets.

New Testament divine Scripture.

II. Point. This reason also doth give us to understand, what was the first Scripture that ever was penned; namely, the bookes of *Moses*, before which, there was no word of God written, which was for the space of 2400. yeares. It may be asked, what was then the *booke of the*

The bookes of Moses be first Scripture.

the warres of the Lord, mentioned Numb.21.14. and the *booke of the Righteous*, spoken of by *Iosuah*, Chap. 10. 12. *Answ.* These were the writings of men, humane stories, like to our bookes of Chronicles. Yet it is said, Jude 14. *Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied.* *Ans.* That prophecie was not penned, but went from hand to hand by word of mouth: and if it were penned, yet it was not done by *Enoch* himselfe, but by some Jew in his name long after *Moses*; for it cannot be proved that *Enoch* ever penned any part of Scripture. Some will aske me, how the people of God did for that space of two thousand and foure hundred yeares, before the Law was written, what guide had they for to know the will of God? *Answ.* They had the Word of God immediately taught them by word of mouth, from God himselfe; as we may see in the Patriarkes, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*: and they to whom it was delivered, did also convey the same from man to man by tradition. And because it may seeme strange, how religion could for so long time be preserved pure without writing, we are to know, that before the law was written the Church of God from the beginning, was the most part in one family only, as in *Adam*, *Enoch*, *Noe*, *Abraham*, &c. whereby it was a more easie thing to preserve Gods Word among them. Againe, those men that first received the Word of God without writing, were of long continuance, living neere to a thousand yeares space, whereby they might better see the Word preserved and continued, without writing, by tradition. Besides, when religion was corrupted, God himselfe restored the puritie thereof, revealing his will againe, and renewing his covenant unto his servants, as he did to *Abraham* and the rest of the Patriarkes.

Here then behold, how the heads of families preserved Gods Word, and true religion, in the beginning of the world; namely, by teaching it to their posteritie: and from them we may learne, what is the dutie, and ought to be the practice of every governour of a family at this day: they must not thinke themselves discharged, for that the Word is written in the Church, and every man may reade and heare the same: but they must see the same be taught unto their children, and to the rest of their family, that so it may be preserved among them. So God commandeth his people, *to teach their children the service of the Passover*, Exod.12.26,27. and *to whet the words of the Law upon their children.* Deut. *6.* 7.

III. Point. In this reason our Saviour takes for granted, that the writings of *Moses* and of the Prophets are of *infallible certainetie*; for it is all one as if he had said, this must needs be every mans dutie, *to doe as he would be done to*: for *this is the Law and the Prophets*: and so answerable to them, all other bookes of Scripture containe doctrine of infallible truth and certainetie. Here some may aske, how we should

A be perswaded hereof in our consciences? *Ans.* By these Arguments, which are all drawne from Scripture it selfe, (for as every Science and Art hath his grounds and principles, so hath the holy Scripture, which is not the Church, but Scripture itselfe,) 1. From the *causes*: 2. From the *effects*: 3. From the *properties*: 4. From *signes*: 5. From the *contraries*: 6. From the *testimonie* that is given hereof.

The first Argument. Among the *causes*, the first and principall is the *Author* thereof, which is God himselfe: to him doe Scriptures referre themselves, and also shew how God is their Author. In Scripture we read that God spake to *Adam*, to *Enoch*, *Noe*, *Abraham*, and the rest; and of *Christ*, the new Testament gives most lively testimonie, making him the Author and subject thereof. Now nothing is fitly ascribed to God, but God in time will bring the same to nought; and therefore if Scripture had not beene Gods Word, it would long agon have vanished. Against the cause *conservant* must be considered; the devill by wicked men and heretickes hath laboured to take away Gods Word from mens hearts and hands: but yet it is still preserved in the Church, which argues that it is kept by a greater power than is in all men and all Angels: that is, by the power of God. Thirdly, the *pen-men*, the instrumentall causes, they were holy men of God, Prophets, and Apostles, who for vertue and pietie farre exceeded other writers: and if they had beene meere politians, their writings would have shewed it: for the pen-men of holy Scripture, have therein faithfully registred their owne faults, which no politicke person would have done. Against, consider the *matter* of holy Scripture, which stands in doctrine, and style; the *doctrine* of Scripture is the Law and the Gospel: now the Law is set forth in most excellent puritie, nothing therein is against right reason, or common equitie. In the lawes of men are many things found against reason and equitie; they command such things as common reason would condemne, and omit many things which reason and equitie would command. And for the *Gospel*, in it is set downe doctrine altogether above mans reason; touching Christs incarnation, and mans redemption by his death: and although these things bee above nature, yet wee finde them true, wholesome, and good, in experience of conscience; which also proves that they are the Word of God. Men may devise things above Nature, but they can never be wholesome to the conscience. Further, for the *style* of Scripture, the phrase is plaine and familiar, and yet in any one speech there is more majestie, than in all the writings of men. Lastly, the *end* of Scripture proves the same to be Gods Word; for the Scripture sets up Gods worship and mans salvation, and yet gives nothing to men or Angels, but all to the glory of God: but for the writings of men, they doe either directly, or by insinuation, ascribe some thing

Matthew. vers. 12.

How may be known.

B

1. From the causes.

C

2. From the effects.

D

thing

Matth. 7. vers. 12.

thing to the writers thereof.

II. Argument. From the *effects*, one worke of Scripture is this: It is against our corrupt nature, crossing and condemning the same; and yet it winneth men to the love thereof, and to obedience thereto: which could not bee unlesse it were the truth of God; for we abhorre and detest the words of men, that bee against our nature. A *second effect* is this; Gods word serves notably to comfort a man in all distresses whatsoever, even in the very pangs of death, when as no word of any man can doe him the least good, but onely his word, that is the Lord of our soules, and the God of our life.

III. Argument. From the *properties* of Scripture; the *first* whereof is *Antiquity*. The Scriptures of all writings are most ancient, and evermore truth is most ancient: among humane writings, we have none of certainty in the things they record, before the times of *Nehemias* and *Ezra*; but the Scripture sets downe things done from the beginning. A *second property* is *mutuall consent*; for although the bookes of Scripture were written by divers men, in sundry ages and times, yet all agree within themselves, no contradiction is in Scripture: but the writings of men have not this mutuall consent, no not in the same Author.

IV. Argument. From the *signes* and miracles thereof. The Doctrine of Scripture teacheth and recorderth true miracles; as the *parting of the sea*, the *staying of the Sunne and Moone*, the *taking away of barrennesse*, and the *incarnation of the Sonne of God*, a miracle of all miracles; all which being wrought by the power of God, shew that the Scripture which recorderth them, is the infallible truth of God.

V. Argument. From the *contraries*. Contrary unto the word of God, is the will of the devill, and mans owne corrupt nature; the devill hateth Scripture, and mans sinnefull nature repineth thereat, when it is checked and controlled thereby: now that which is contrary unto these two, must needs bee most holy and true; and that is the word of God.

VI. Argument. From *testimony*. There be two kindes of testimonies touching Scripture: one of holy *Martyrs*; who in all ages have sealed the truth thereof with their bloud, preferring the word of God before their owne lives. It will bee said, that Heretickes have dyed for falshood: *Answer.* There is great difference in their ends; the Martyrs have unspeakeable joy in the Spirit in their torments: but Heretickes have no such joy, but a naturall senselesse blockishnesse, whereby they undergoe these tortures. A second testimony is most principall, and that is the testimony of *Gods Spirit*: for when men doe begiinne to learne and obey the word of God, then the Spirit of God settles their consciences in the perswasion of the truth of Scripture: whereupon it is called the *sealing of the Spirit of truth*, because it assures a man in conscience of his reconciliation with God; which assurance none can have, till he be first resolved of the certainty of Scripture, which is the ground thereof.

Question. How may a man finde this seale in himselfe? *Answ.* When he findes the Scripture imprinted in his heart, as the signe of the seale is in the wax; and his heart is transformed into Scripture, as the wax is into the similitude of the seale; then doth the Spirit out of the holy Scripture, seale up assurance of the truth thereof unto his soule. None other writing of any man hath the like worke in the heart of man; and from these grounds, especially from this last, may wee resolve our selves that the Bible is of most infallible certainetie.

And yet for further resolution, let us see what objections are made against it. *I. Object.* It is said, that Scripture is against all reason. *Answ.* This is not true: for the Law is perfect reason, and the Gospell is above reason, not contrary to reason: nay, holding this principle of nature, that *God is Almighty*, even the Gospell it selfe may stand with reason; as *that the Sonne of God should be incarnate*, and that by *his death we should receive life*, which is the summe of the Gospell.

II. Object. There bee fallihoods in Scripture; for the passage thorow the red Sea was no miracle, but might bee done in the ebbing of the Sea, as in other countries there is oft-times passage thorow the Washes. *Answer.* The Scripture saith, the waters stood as wals on each side of the passage, which could not bee by an ebbe: against, reason sheweth that it could not bee by the naturall course, for their passage over was at the full of the Moone, when all Seas are most full, and doe not ebbe and flow, as they use to doe at other times.

III. Object. The greatest part of the whole world reject the Bible, as Turks and Pagans; and the Jewes care not for the new Testament. *Answ.* We must reverence Gods worke, in this with-holding his mercy in Christ from some, to whom he denies the meanes, which is his holy Word: for hence it comes that some reject the Bible, because God in his secret, yet most just judgement, with-holds this blessing from them. And therefore though Atheists barke, yet the truth is, *Scripture is the word of God.*

Vses. 1. Seeing the Word written is the certaine truth of God, we must take heed of being seduced by Popish teachers: who say there be two kinds of Scripture; Inward, and Outward. *Inward Scripture* is a consent of doctrine written by the holy Ghost in the hearts of all Catholikes, and this (say they) is the right Scripture.

A

B

C

D

3. From the properties of Scripture.

4. From miracles.

5. From contraries.

6. From testimonies.

Of Martyrs.

Testimonie of the Spirit.

Objections against Scripture answered.

Popish twofold Scripture.

Ambrosius Catharinus. cap. 10. 12.

ture. The *outward Scripture* is written in paper and parchment, which hath no certain sense, but as the present Church determines thereof. But this is a devillish doctrine, abolishing *written Scripture, the true word of God*, and setting up the opinions of their owne hearts, making Scripture what themselves will: wee must therefore hold the written Word to bee right Scripture, and the ground of that which is in the heart: for the Word written carries a most certaine sense, being both text and glosse: whereas their inward Scripture varieth as men doe, unlesse it bee grounded on the written Word.

II. Vse. The certainty of Scripture must teach us to beleeve Gods word, and not to feare to rest our selves upon it. The Author of Scripture by his providence preserves his owne word, so as all the men in earth, for substance cannot corrupt the same; and therefore whatsoever it saith, we need not doubt but it is the will of God.

III. Point. From this reason we may also gather the *Authority of Canonicall Scripture*: for *we must doe, as we would be done to*, because *the Law and the Prophets say so*: and hence it followes that the Law and Prophets have an high, soveraigne, and absolute authority. This authority of Scripture stands in two things: I. in power to give judgement. II. in the all-sufficiency thereof, in and of it selfe; and both these are noted here by our Saviour Christ in this reason.

For the first, *the power of giving judgement* is that whereby Scripture doth fully and absolutely determine of all things needfull to salvation concerning faith and manners: and for this cause the Lawes of God are oft in Scripture called *judgements*. There be divers judgements ascribed to sundry sorts of persons in Scripture: First, it gives a judgement to every private man. [a] *The spirituall man discerneth or judgeth all things*: and Saint *John* [b] bids the beleevers in the Church *prove the spirit*, that is, trie by judgment the doctrines delivered. Secondly, the Scripture gives judgement to publike persons, as to *Pastors, Ministers*, and to the *Governours of the Church*: *Let two or three prophesie, and the rest judge*: 1 Cor. 14. 29. and *the spirit of the Prophets is subject to the Prophets*, ver. 32. Thirdly, Judgement is ascribed to the *Prophets* and *Apostles* in Scripture: Act. 15. 28. *It seemed good to the holy Ghost and to us*: and this is an high judgement, which befals not any private man, or any ordinary Minister, or Generall Councell ordinarily, but is peculiar to extraordinary Prophets, that were the pen-men of holy Scripture. And these three kinds of Judgements must be distinguished; the two first kindes are inferiour and ministeriall kindes of judgement, depending on an higher and more soveraigne Judgement: for private men and ordinary Ministers and Councels give Judgement, yet not of themselves, but by their rule, which is the word of God; and this Judgement is nothing else but a Ministery, pronouncing and declaring the meaning of the will of God revealed in his Word. But besides this, there is a soveraigne kinde of Judgement, vouchsafed to the Prophets and Apostles, determining absolutely in matters of faith and conscience, what is to be done, and what is not; and this is the judgement of God himselfe, whereupon the Apostles might say, *It seemeth good to the holy Ghost and to us*, Act. 15. 28. And that this their judgement is absolute, appeares by Scripture, *He that heareth you, heareth me*, (saith Christ to his Apostles) *and he that refuseth you, refuseth mee*, Luk. 10. 16. and *Paul* delivering the Gospell of Christ to the Galatians, bids them *hold them accursed that teacheth them otherwise*, Gal. 1. 7. and the promise of *sending the Spirit of truth*, Joh. 16. 13. was directly intended to the Apostles, and onely in them fully accomplished. For our better conceiving hereof, we have a resemblance of this soveraigne judgement in the Commonwealth: the high Court of Parliament gives judgement of matters in Law, and so doe Lawyers and Judges in common Courts; yet there is great difference betweene these two: the Court of Parliament makes the Law, and determines absolutely in civil matters, without controlement, what must be done, and what not: but the Lawyers make not the Law, but pronounce the meaning of the Law unto me... Now the Scriptures, the Prophets and Apostles, they are like to the Court of Parliament in giving judgement: private men and ordinary Ministers give judgement like unto the Lawyers, which is not absolute, but ministeriall, depending on an higher judgement.

Vses. I. If the Prophets and Apostles have soveraigne power to give absolute judgement in matters of faith and manners; then we must here learne to make choice of a right Judge: for unto one must we appeale in matters of faith & conscience: and this right Judge is Gods word, which we must sticke unto, and to none other. The Commandement is plaine for matters of difficulty that concerne the conscience: Iſ. 8. 20. *To the Law, and to the testimony*: and our Saviour Christ referres us to Scripture for all matters that concerne salvation; Joh. 5. 39. *Search the Scripture*. If we would know what is true religion, and what is erroneous; what is equity in any matter of conscience, wee must have recourse to Scripture. It will be said; Scripture is an unfit Judge, it cannot speake? I answer, It speakes sufficiently to determine of all matters of faith and conscience: we see in common experience, a man may resolve his friend in matters of doubt, as well by letter, as by word of mouth; why then may not the word of God sent from heaven unto his Church, resolve mens consciences in all matters of doubt for faith and manners? and indeed, let any man come in humilitie, and seriously search the Scripture, and hee shall finde resolution therein for any

A B C D

Who Judge we must chuse.

matter of conscience whatsoever.

Vse 2. By this authority of Scripture in giving soveraigne judgement, wee are taught to take heed of an incompetent Judge, which men for many hundred yeares have set up in their hearts, to rely unto in matters of faith and conscience: and that is, to put the Church in roome of the Word, for soveraigne judgement. The Church of Rome teacheth, that [c] the Church must judge of the Scripture: yea, without Scripture [d] give soveraigne determination in matters of conscience, as having more authority than Scripture, because it gives authority thereunto: but this is the ground of Atheisme, and heresie, and the path-way to Popery: the true Church of God must have the honour of Christs Spouse; but yet the authority of soveraigne judgement must not bee given to her, but onely to the word of God himselfe.

The Church an incompetent Judge.

c Conc. Trid. sess. 4.

d Ecclesia Catholica, cui vnicè iudicandi de Eccles. & ejus author.

The second part of the authority of Scripture is, that every part of Canonicall Scripture is *Authenticall*; that is, of sufficient authority of it selfe, though it be not confirmed by any other testimony; for Scripture is the word of God, and the testimony of Scripture is the testimony of God himselfe, than which none can be greater: as Saint *John* saith, *If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater*, 1 Joh. 5. 9. For the better conceiving of this point, conferre all the bookes that are or ever were together, and thereby it will appeare, that the Scripture is of it selfe *Authenticall*. There bee three sorts of bookes, Divine, Ecclesiasticall, and Humane: *Divine bookes* are the bookes of God, penned by the Prophets and Apostles; and they are all the word of God: for whether wee regard the matter of them, or the manner of revealing them, they are all from God; the Prophets and Apostles were onely Gods hands and instruments in penning them, the holy Ghost gave the matter, the order, and the very words: from whence it must needs follow, that they are of all sufficient authority of themselves. *Ecclesiasticall bookes*, are bookes of divine matters, penned by learned men in the Church; and they are either generall books, or particular: *Generall bookes Ecclesiasticall* I call those, which were either made or confirmed by the whole Church; as the Creeds of the Apostles, the Nicene, and of *Athanasius*: and the foure first generall Councels; and these have Catholike allowance, yet not absolute authority, but depending on Scripture. *Particular bookes Ecclesiasticall* I call the Catechisines and Confessions of particular Churches, made by them, or by particular members thereof; which have not authority of themselves, but from the Scripture, or from generall consent. Now both these kindes of bookes may be called *Gods word*, so farre forth as they agree with Scripture: and yet they are also the word of men, because they were penned by men, and have both order and

Scripture is authenticall.

Three sorts of bookes. 1. Divine.

2. Ecclesiastical.

A B C D

style from men: and in this regard, that they were partly mens workes, they are not authenticall of themselves, but depend upon the authority of Scripture. *Humane bookes* are books penned by men, either of the Church, or out of the Church, concerning humane things, as bookes of naturall Philosophy, of Policy, and other Arts: and these are not the bookes of God, but of men alone, having both matter and style from men: many of them containe excellent truths in their kinde, yet gathered onely from experience and common reason; but they have not in them that truth, which is *truth according to godlinesse*, serving to build up and to binde the conscience, unlesse it be in one case, to stop the mouthes of Atheists and Epicures, and to convince their consciences. And thus by conference of all bookes, wee see that Scripture alone is authenticall in it selfe, and no bookes beside.

3. Humane bookes.

Vses. 1. This teacheth us, that Ministers in the dispensing of Gods word should content themselves with the testimony of Scripture alone; for the end of the Ministery is to worke and confirme faith, and to settle and build up the conscience in the truth of religion, and matters concerning salvation: which no other word can doe, save only the word of God in Scripture, that hath sufficient authority in it selfe, from which conscience cannot appeale: and for which cause our Saviour Christ the true Prophet of the Church, contents himselfe with the testimony of the Law and Prophets alone; and after him his Apostles did the like. See this notably confirmed by *Paul*, who in his preaching to the Jewes, professed himselfe to have said *none other thing than that which the Prophets and Moses said should come*. Other writings have their good use in their time and place, but not in the publike Ministery: for authority and testimony from Scripture is authenticall: *This the Scripture saith, therefore it is so*; but *authority from Councels and Fathers, is sophistry*: as, *Austin* saith so, therefore it is so; this is no good reason, for it implies that all that *Austin* said is true; which indeed is false, hee being as all men are, subject to errour.

Vse. Gods testimony alone in preaching.

Act. 26. 22.

2. *Vse.* This also sheweth, that we cannot beleeve unwritten traditions, though they bee called Apostolical. The Church of Rome intend to deceive us, when they would bearees in hand that halfe of those things which are to be beleeved, are not written in Scripture, but received by tradition: but these traditions we cannot beleeve by a divine faith, howsoever by a common humane faith wee may; for they are contained in the books of Councels and Fathers, which were worthy men, yet subject to errour.

Vnwritten traditions not authenticall. Andradius orthod. explicat. p. 63.

3. *Vse.* This also sheweth, that we must submit our selves with feare and trembling to the word of God: for it hath absolute authority to judge us, and to convince our conscience in all

matters of faith and manners that pertaine to salvation.

IV. Point. Whereas Christ alleageth *Moses* and the Prophets to consume his ministery, it may be demanded, whether there be any difference for authority, betweene Christ and the Prophets: for he that alleageth another mans authority, seemes to bee inferiour thereto? I answer, If wee compare Christ and the Prophets, wee must distinguish betweene their doctrine and their persons. The doctrine of *Moses* and of the Prophets, is equall to the doctrine of Christ two waies; First, in certainty of truth: for it is as undoubtedly true, as if Christ himselfe had taught the same. Secondly, in efficacy and authority for the power of binding conscience: for the doctrine of the Prophets bindes conscience as fully and truly, as if Christ himselfe had spoken it. And yet the person of Christ is above the person of *Moses*, and of all the Prophets; for hee is the Sonne of God, both God and man, they were men; he is the author of truth, they onely the instruments and penmen thereof: and from hence it comes, that Christs doctrine doth more binde us to obedience, than the doctrine of the Prophets; because the person delivering it, is of more authority and excellency: and for this cause Christ alleageth *Moses* and the Prophets, not for that his word is inferiour to theirs, but that in regard of our obedience hee might increase the authority of *Moses* and the Prophets, because a greater measure of obedience is required to Christs word, in regard of the dignity of his person. And this shewes that we now are more bound to obedience under the Gospell, than the people were under the Law: for wee have Christs doctrine, which in regard of his person is of more authority than *Moses* and the Prophets: see this point plainly laid downe by the Author to the Hebrewes: in the first Chapter he saith, *God in times past spake to his Church by the Prophets, but in these last dayes he hath spoken to us by his Son*: and in the second chapter, ver. 1. hee layes downe the use of this that now we have Christ for our Teacher; namely, that therefore we *ought more abundantly to give heed to the things that we have heard*, lest at any time wee let them slip, &c. shewing that our disobedience now shall bee more severely punished.

V. Point. Ignorant people abuse this text, to perswade themselves that preaching is needlesse, because no man can say more than this; *Doe as ye would be done to, for this is the summe of the Law and the Prophets.* But wee must know, that this is not the summe of all that the Prophets say, but only touching the matter of *justice* and *equity*: and indeed that wee may attaine to salvation, more is needfull: for wee must not onely know Gods word in generall, but in particular, seeing that we may faile in the particulars of that which we know in generall. Againe, preaching serves not onely for the removing of ignorance, and the increase of knowledge, but to excite and build up good conscience and honest lives, by the increase of faith, repentance, love of God and man, and of obedience; and this use the most learned and godly man that ever was, may make of the publike Ministery, though dispensed by one that is farre inferiour to him in knowledge and piety.

Lastly, it may be demanded how this can be the summe of the Law and the Prophets, *to doe as we would be done to with reason*; seeing we are further bound by the Law to performe duties of love and obedience to God. *Answ.* This rule is the summe of all: for our love to God must be shewed in the practice of the duties of love, justice and mercy towards men: for God is invisible, and it pleaseth him to make himselfe seene in our visible neighbour, requiring that our love to himselfe should be shewed in the workes of mercy, justice, and goodnesse towards men. Men may flatter themselves, and say they love God, but if it bee not shewed in the love of their neighbours, they deceive themselves, there is no love of God in them. And therefore they are deceived that thinke all is well with them, when they come to Church, and receive the Sacraments: for religion stands not in the outward service of God, unlesse it be shewed forth in the duties of justice, love, and mercy, commanded in the second Table: see Jam. 1. 27. *Pure religion and undefiled before God, is to visit the fatherlesse and widdowes in their adversity, and to keepe himselfe unspotted of the world.*

Matth. 7. vers. 12.

Two waies Christ and the Prophets equall.

Mens flattery.

V. 13 *Enter in at the strait gate: for it is the wide gate, and broad way that leadeth to destruction: and many there be which goe in thereat.*

14 *Because the gate is strait, and the way narrow that leadeth unto life, and few there be that finde it.*

These two verses, being the fifth part of this chapter, containe the tenth point of Doctrine in this Sermon of our Saviour Christ: wherein hee exhorteth his hearers and us all effectually, to an earnest care in seeking everlasting life: and withall admoniseth us in the matter of salvation, not to follow the multitude, because most men goe the broad way to destruction.

Tenth part of Christs Sermon.

The words containe two parts. A Commandement, *Enter in at the strait gate*: and a reason in the words following, *for it is the wide gate.* Yet for our further edification and instruction,

Matth. 7. vers. 13, 14.

on, I will consider and handle five points, which are here set downe by our Saviour Christ: I. that there be two contrary cities or kingdomes, in one of which every man and woman must abide for ever after this life: and further, that these afford unto men a contrary estate, the one life, the other death and destruction. II. That there are two distinct wayes to these two cities or kingdomes: one leading to destruction; the other leading unto life. III. The condition and property of these two wayes: The way of life is *strait and narrow*: The way of destruction is *broad* and *wide*, and that from the beginning to the end. IV. What men doe in these waies, namely, that *many* walke in the broad way, and *few* can finde the strait and narrow way. V. What men ought to doe touching these wayes; namely, passe by the broad way, and enter into and walke in the strait way: which is the scope of Christs exhortation and instruction in this place. Of these in order.

Two distinct places for mens final abode.

For the first: These two cities are two distinct places ordained of God, for the finall and eternall abode of all mankind after this life, according to that which every man hath done in his body. These are termed diversly in Scripture; one, *the kingdome of heaven*: the other, *utter darknesse*, in the chapter following, ver. 11, 12. The one, *Abrahams bosome*: the other, *hell fire.* Luk. 16. 23. and in the 21. and 22. Chapters of the Revelation they are notably described, the one is called the *city of God*; the other, the *burning lake*: and usually the one is called *heaven*, the other *hell.* And as these are distinct places, so they afford unto men two distinct estates: The one *life*, the other *destruction*; as it is said, the *narrow way leads to life*: the *broad way to destruction.* By *life* here is meant, a blessed state of man in which he lives in fellowship with God, and hath his heart filled with the unspeakable love and goodnesse of God, and with endlesse joy from Gods immediate presence. And this indeed is the onely true life: our naturall life is but a shadow thereof. By *perdition* or *destruction* we are to understand a cursed state of man, in which hee is without all fellowship with God in respect of his favour, mercy, and love; and yet in body, soule, and conscience doth apprehend the bitternesse of Gods wrath and furie for evermore: having no fellowship save onely with the devill and his angels, and damned soules. This is no life, but eternall death, though soule and body live together eternally.

Mens different estate in heaven and hell.

No purgatory.

Vses. I. In that Christ doth here mention but two cities or places, to the one whereof every man must resort after death; wee may gather that there is no middle place or condition betweene life and destruction. A third place or state the Scripture knoweth not, and therefore there is no place of purging the soules of men after this life, which the Papists call Purgatorie: If there had, the word of God would have revealed it. But the Papists say, it is the upper part of hell neere to the hell of the damned; I answer, If that were so, then there is no salvation for them that are in purgatory; for there is no returning out of hell to heaven, by reason of the *great gulfe betweene them*, Lu. 16. 26. and they that are in any part of hell are but damned persons.

*Decam. dep. 19. l. 2. c. 6.

II. Vse. If there be but two places, and in them two estates only according to that which men have done here on earth, either good or evill; then we must be admonished with all care and constancie to use all good meanes, whereby we may escape the one, and attaine to the other; to be freed from destruction, and to gaine salvation. In the massacre and sacking of a city, in which some are slaine, and some escape alive, every one hath care to shift for himselfe, to save his temporall life: much more then ought wee to provide for eternall life, seeing at the last day wherein the whole world shall be ransacked, every one must undergoe either salvation or destruction: if we had our deserving, we should be confounded every moment; but God in mercy grants unto us length of dayes for this very end, that we should seeke Gods kingdome and life everlasting: and therefore this must be our principall care and study, that wee may be alwayes ready, whensoever we shall be called hence; and the rather, because wee know not when Christ will call us hence, Luk. 12. 40. *Bee yee also prepared therefore, for the sonne of man will come at an houre when yee thinke not.*

Seriousnesse to escape hell and gaine heaven.

III. Point. As there be *two diverse estates in two distinct places*; so there be *two severall waies* that lead thereunto: the one, the *way of life*, v. 14. the other, the *way to destruction*, v. 13. First, I will speake of the *way of life*, and thereby shall we see what *the way of destruction* is; in which regard it standes us all in hand to know what is the way of life. Now none hath better noted it out unto us, than the Prophet *Habakuc*, cha. 2. v. 4. in these words, *But the just shall live by faith*: in which place he foretels the afflictions of the Jewes by the Chaldeans: whereupon the Jewes might say, whereby then shall wee stay our selves? he answers, *by faith*: *The just man lives*, that is, leadeth his life *by faith.* Some give this meaning to the Prophet, *The just by faith shall have life everlasting*: but the Apostle expoundeth it otherwise, Gal. 3. 11. So then *to walke in the way of life*, is to lead our lives by faith in Christ: as Heb. 10. 39.

Two waies.

1. The way of life.

Here two points must be considered: I. What *faith* that is by which men must live in this world: namely, *true justifying faith*, the very same by which they are to be saved in the day of the Lord. *I live by faith* (saith Paul) *in the sonne of God, who hath loved me, & given himselfe for me*, Gal. 2. 20. where he doth notably expound this text, shewing, that faith in Christ our Redeemer, is that faith whereby we must lead our lives in this world: for they which will

will be saved by their faith, must first live by their faith: he that believes well, lives well: and that faith will never save the soule, that cannot guide and order the life: many men think it is sufficient to salvation to beleeve the promise of life; but faith hath a further worke in them that it saveth: for it also causeth them to live thereby. Now a man lives by faith, when he rests himselfe on God, and suffers himselfe wholly to be led and guided by Gods written word. Example hereof we have in *Abraham*, Hebr. 11.8. *and by faith forsake his owne country, and at Gods Commandement went he knew not whither.* More particularly; a Christian mans life is twofold: spirituall, and temporall: both which he must live in this world, for heavenly life beginnes before wee die: and both these kinds of life on earth we preserved by faith. The *spirituall life* of a Christian is that whereby he hath true fellowship with God: this beginnes in this life; and it stands in reconciliation with God, wherein a man is accepted to the right of eternall life. This reconciliation is life, and it is held by faith: and faith onely in Gods word and promise in Christ alone, is it that makes us lay hold of, receive, and keepe this our reconciliation. Wee must give God this honour, to beleeve his promise of remission of sinnes, and life everlasting in Christ; and upon our faith, God vouchsafeth unto us remission of sinnes, and life everlasting. Here some may aske, whether every thing that wee beleeve be made ours, as riches, honour, and such like? *Ans.* No: but onely that which God promiseth in the Evangelicall covenant of life everlasting, upon our faith. Here also some will say, If this be all, I am well, for I beleeve Gods promise. But herein many deceive themselves, beleeving the promise fully. True faith is this: men must seeke the pardon of their sinnes, and in seeking beleeve: but they that beleeve without using the means deceive themselves, seeing God hath joyned his promise to the meanes. Wee offend God daily, and therefore must daily renue our repentance, and by faith beleeve the pardon of our daily sinnes.

Further, this spirituall life hath his fruits. It is no dead life; for hee that hath remission of sinnes, lives in Christ, and this life shewes it selfe in the fruits of good workes: as mercie, love, goodnesse: and in every good worke wee must live by faith, for to the doing of any good worke, there is a double faith required: first, a *generall faith*, whereby wee are perswaded that the worke is allowed and required of God: secondly, a *speciall faith*, whereby we are perswaded, that the particular worke done is accepted of God. In the acceptation of the worke, God first accepteth the person in Christ, and then the worke in and for the person. Yea, wee are moved to every good worke by faith: for it brings to minde Gods love, mercy, and goodnesse to us: and is moveth us to perform the like duties of love and mercy towards our brethren.

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Thirdly, if a man lie in any affliction, suffering and enduring great crosses, as every child of God hath many and grievous afflictions, so as the righteous shall scarce be saved: and to all and every one of them, wee must live by faith, and thereby rely on Christ, not on our selves. Example hereof wee have in Christ upon the Crosse, who even then when he felt the wrath of God upon him, and his indignation against him, did yet cry unto him as to his God, *My God, my God:* and *Job* in grievous temptation and affliction, said unto the Lord, *Lo, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job 13.15. and so must we even then lay hold on Gods mercy, when we feele no comfort in our selves: so did

B *David*, when hee felt no comfort, yet hee did cleave to God in his meditation, Psal. 77.7,8, 10,11. In disputations in Schooles, it is a faule to sticke alwaies to the conclusion: yet in this combat with Satan it is no fault, but a good practice of true faith.

Temporall life stands in the practice of some particular calling: and some men be of one calling, some of another; and every one hath, or ought to have for a one lawfull calling or other wherein to lead his temporall life. Now the workes of a mans particular calling, they must bee practised by faith, even the duties of the basest calling that is, as of the shepherd. And that a man may doe the duties of his calling in faith, he must first have a grounded conscience that his worke is allowed of God, and accordingly he must doe his worke. Against, every man in his calling must have a care of his owne life, and of those that belong unto him, to provide for them things necessary, as meat, drinke, and cloathing: and this care must be ruled by faith, that is, a man must use the lawfull meanes to get these things, and yet so as he leave the issue and event unto Gods blessing: wee may provide for necessaries, but wee must goe no further, but use the lawfull ordinary meanes, and sanctifie them by prayer, leaving the blessing unto God, *Cast thy workes on God*, saith *Salomon*, Prov. 16.3. and S. *Peter* bids us *cast all our care on God*, 1 Pet. 5.7. Lastly, every calling hath his crosses: no life is so

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quiet that it wanteth all vexations. Now when crosses come upon any man in his calling, then must he beare the same by faith: he must rest on God, and quiet his mind with the good will and pleasure of God. *He that believes* (saith the Prophet) *shall not make haste*, Isa. 28.16. that is, he shall not be carried headlong with a desire to satisfie his owne pleasure and appetite, either in seeking to be freed from evill, or to enjoy some blessing, but shall content himselfe with the good pleasure of God. And thus wee see what it is to live by faith, which is the right way to life eternall.

Uses. 1. This sheweth, that a great number are farre wide, which thinke that if they live uprightly among men, then all is well: this honest

How temporall life is saved by faith.

A civill honesty not sufficient to salvation.

honest life is verie commendable among men, but it is not sufficient to salvation. It is but a worke of nature, for a man by naturall reason may lead a civill upright life, as many have done among the heathen: but the life that must bring a man to Heaven, must be lead by faith: and therefore they that would walke the way to life, must walke by faith, not by reason only.

We must not live by sense.

II. This also sheweth that they are deceived which live by sense, measuring Gods love and hatred by outward blessings and crosses; and therefore when God takes away the meanes, they will no longer trust on him: but we count it a point of dishonestie, not to trust our honest friend without a pawne: much more than is it a dishonour to God, when we will not relie upon him, without outward pledges of his favour: and therefore we must relie on God when all meanes faile: for *no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him*, Eccles. 9.1.

Measure not grace by feeling.

III. Many that professe religion are deceived, that measure their grace and goodnesse in religion, by feeling in their owne hearts: but wee must not relie thereon, for true faith may be in the heart without inward sense: against, the Devill may put false comforts many times into a mans heart: the bad man receives the Word with joy, Luk. 8.13. looke to thy faith by Christs word, and thereby judge thy selfe, and rest not in thine inward feeling.

Learne to know Gods will.

IIII. This teacheth us to acquaint our selves with all the commandements of God that be in the Bible; and with all the promises that concerne the pardon of sinnes and life everlasting: for without this knowledge there can be no faith: and therefore wee must abandon all ignorance of these things, and instruct our selves and those that belong unto us in the word of God, that they and wee may live by faith.

How to live in affliction.

V. These are happie dayes of peace and of many temporall blessings wherein we now live: but we must not live alwayes in this peace. God hath begun to set his judgements among us, and if wee doe not repent, wee must looke for further and more grievous judgements, as the losse of his Word, and a sword upon our selves, our friends, and children: what if the dayes come, how must we then live? namely, by faith in the word and promise of God: lay hold on this, and though thou lose friends, goods, and thine owne temporall life, yet hold fast thy spirituall life; by faith cleave unto Christ, and then in the middest of swords and weapons of death, thou shalt walke the way to eternall life. And thus much of the way of life.

The second way is the *way to destruction*: which is called *the way of sinners* and *of the ungodly*, Psal. 1.1,6. This way hath many paths, which tend all to one end, and meet in the same period; and they may all bee reduced to these three heads: I. the way of *nature*: II. the way of *false faith*: III. the way of *faith* and *nature* joyned both together.

The *way of nature* is, when men live only by the light of nature: of this S. *Paul* speaks, Act. 14.16. *God suffered all the Gentiles to walke in their owne ways*; wherein they were void of God in Christ, and so not under mercie. The *way of false faith* is some thing more than the way of nature; but yet it leadeth to destruction, because their faith is false and profession vaine; and this is the way of false religion, whereof there be three maine and principall at this day, to which all other may be referred: The religion of the *Turks*, of the *Iewes*, and of the *Papists*. The *Turkes* in their religion acknowledge Christ for a great Prophet, but not to be God, neither doe they looke for any salvation by him. The *Iewes* in their religion acknowledge but one God, yet out of Christ: they acknowledge not his incarnation past, but expect it yet to come: they wait for an earthly kingdome: they holde the old Testament only and deny the new. Now both these refusing Christ, have not the Father, and Even have no salvation in their religion. The *Papists* acknowledge much truth formally, but then againe they overturne it: for they hold that generall faith, which the Devils may have: but for that speciall justifying faith, whereby a man is to beleeve his owne salvation, the remission of his sins, and his owne reconciliation with God in Christ, that they renounce. Again, the Christ of the Papist is no true Christ: for they make him but half a Saviour, or not so much; even only an instrument to make men Saviours of themselves; for by his grace they doe worke properly meritorious, and fully worthy of eternall life. They rob him also of his *manhood*, saying, it is everie where in his ownnoritie, where masse is said: for they have *the selfe same body* that was crucified. Also they deny his offices: I. his Kingly office: for they part stakes with him, and give it to the Pope, in giving his hath power to make lawes which binde the conscience, as Gods Lawes doe. II. his *priesthood*, because everie Masse-Priest offers Christ anew: and they make Saints intercessours, especially the Virgin *Marie*. III. his prophetical office, saying the Scriptures are imperfect without tradition; uncertaine without the sense and meaning of the Church: the original copies are corrupted; and the Church is above them in authoritie.

The third way is the way of faith and nature together: this is the common way wherein most Protestants walke: for we hold the right faith in word; our profession and judgement is right: but yet our lives are lead according to nature. And these three paths are all in the broad way to destruction. And therefore as wee hold true doctrine, and right faith in word, so let us lead our lives accordingly, and resistie the same by our workes, especially in the times of dearth when God layes his hand on the poore, and thereby ties the hearts of the rich.

III. Point. The properties of these ways. The way to life is narrow and strait: the way to destruction

1. The way of nature.

2. The way of false faith.

Turkes.

Iewes.

Papists.

a Concil. Trid. sess. 6. cap. 9. & can. 11, &c.

b Rhem. on 2 Tim. 4. sect. 4.

c Rhem. on Matth. 26. sect. 4.

d P. Mar. de Rom. Pont. lib. 2. cap. 15, 16.

e Rhem. on Heb. 9. sect. 10.

f Masse Rom. à Pio 5. in Concil. p. 304.

g Confess. Colon. fol. 2. 2.

h Ibid. fol. 117.

i Canon 1. 2. c. 13.

k Pighi. controver. c. 1. c. 2.

l. The way of nature and grace.

deſtinction is broad and wide. For the firſt: *The way of life is narrow and ſtrait*, from the firſt entrance to the laſt paſſage: why ſo? Firſt, becauſe the way of life is only one ſingle path: but the way of death is manifold, containing ſundrie paths. Secondly, they that ſelves within the way of life, containe then ſelves within the bonds and liſts of Gods word: for *the words of the wiſe are as nailes and pales to keepe us in*, Eccleſ. 12. 11. Thirdly, in the way to life there are many afflictions and offences, as Acts 14. 22. *Through manifold afflictions we muſt enter into the kingdome of Heaven*: and Hoſ. 2. 6. *I will ſtop thy way with thornes*: meaning, that by ſharpe afflictions hee would hedge them in the way of obedience. But ſome may ſay, why then doth Chriſt ſay, *his yoke is light*, Matth. 11. 30. and S. *John, his commandements are not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 2. and *David, I will walke at large or liberties*, Pſal. 119. 45. *I anſwer*: The way is ſtrait and narrow in reſpect of our nature: but yet broad and eaſie by his aſſiſting grace and helpe. Heere then we ſee what courſe we muſt take if we meane to come unto Chriſt, namely, we muſt tread in this narrow way, and become like unto him in ſuffering afflictions: for this way he went here on earth, and ſo entred into his glorie.

The propertie of the way of death is *breadth*. Now the way *of death is broad*: firſt, becauſe the way of ſinning is manifold; even as truth is only one, and error manifold. Secondly, they that walk in this way breake out of the bounds of Gods word, and doe not containe themſelves therein. Thirdly, herein they meet with ſundrie croſſes and impediments: as *David* ſaith, *They are not in trouble as other men: they proſper alway and increaſe in riches*, Pſal. 73. 5, &c. 12. And the reaſon is, becauſe they ſeeke by all meanes to ſatiſfie their hearts deſire, whether by right or wrong: ſaying with the foole in the Goſpell, *Soule, ſoule, take thy reſt, live at eaſe*. Luk. 12. 19.

IV. Point. What men doe in theſe wayes: namely, the greateſt part of men walke in the broad way, but few in the narrow way.

Hence we learne ſundrie inſtructions. I. We muſt not be offended or diſcouraged when wee ſee moſt men live either in a falſe religion, or in groſſe impietie: for the greateſt part walke in the broad way. II. Wee muſt not follow the multitude in matters of religion, but thoſe that follow Chriſt, the Patriarks, Prophets, and Apoſtles: for the moſt goe wide, and the feweſt hold the right way of life. III. That *univerſalitie* is no marke of a true Church: for the true Church is in the ſtrait way, but therein the feweſt number walke. IV. *Univerſall grace* is a device of man: for few finde the way of life, and therefore it is laid and unknowen. If it be ſaid, that all might findeit if they would: *I anſwer*, they cannot: for the word *finding*, doth preſuppoſe a ſeeking: as if Chriſt had ſaid, though many give themſelves to ſeeke the way

A of life, yet few they bee that finde it. The like phrate wee have, Matth. 24. 38. *In the dayes of Noah they ate and drunke*; that is, they gave themſelves to eating and drinking. Againe, S. *Luke* hath it thus, *and ſhall not bee able to finde it*: Why then doe not the moſt finde the way to life? Is it becauſe they ſeeke it not? No verily: S. *Luke* denies that: Why then is the way hid to the moſt, and revealed to few? Becauſe Chriſt teacheth us, *becauſe it ſo pleaſeth God*, Matth. 11. 25, 26.

V. Point. What muſt we doe in regard of theſe two wayes? we muſt *enter*, yea, ſay S. *Luke* hath it, *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait way*: and *to paſſe by the broad way*. This is the commandement of our Saviour Chriſt: wherein three things are imployned us: firſt, that wee muſt come into this ſtrait way, and eſchew the broad way: ſecondly, wee muſt not be diſcouraged for the ſtraitneſſe of the way: and thirdly, wee muſt ſtrive to enter in.

B The firſt is a neceſſarie duties in theſe times: for wee are like unto Mariners which paſſe by many pleaſant comaries, and ſtately buildings, and doe only behold them afore off, but not enter into them, nor land upon them. We muſt therefore ceaſe only to talke of the way of life, and beginne to walke in it. If any ſhall aske, how we may come to walke in this way: *Anſwer*, read Jer. 6. 16. ſee there a notable leſſon: Firſt, we muſt *inquire which is the old way, for the old way is the right way*. But where ſhall we learne out the old way? *Anſw.* In the holy Bible: there ſhall wee ſee the way that the Patriarks, Prophets, and Apoſtles went. Secondly, having found the right way, wee muſt labour to know all the turnings of it. We muſt ſee what things we are to beleeve and doe, *having the myſterie of faith in a good conſcience*, 1 Tim. 3. 9. Thirdly, we muſt walke in this way, Jer. 6. 16. for it is not ſufficient to know the will of God, and to make profeſſion of religion, but wee muſt put in practice the things which wee know. And laſtly, we muſt be circumſpect to keepe our ſelves in the right way: Hag. 1. 5. *Set your hearts on your wayes*: Pſal. 110. 59. *I conſidered my wayes, and turned my feet into thy teſtimonies*.

C The ſecond charge in this Commandement is, that when we walke in the way to life, *the ſtraineſſe of the way muſt not diſcourage us from going forward therein*. This is the principall point intended by our Saviour Chriſt in this commandement, even to arme us with courage and perſeverance againſt afflictions, croſſes, and temptations, which might diſmay and daunt us in this way. And in this charge wee are taught ſundrie weightie duties to bee practiſed in the profeſſion of Chriſts true religion.

I. Dutie. That we are not to give to our ſelves the libertie of heart which nature deſireth in all of us; but we muſt reſtraine our ſelves thereof, and bring our mindes, our thoughts, affections, our wills, ſpeeches, and actions into the ſtraits

Or, holie Ordinances of God, as wee read, Luke 13. 24.

Firſt charge.

How to walke in the way of life.

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II. Charge.

How to get courage againſt the ſtraitneſſe of the way.

I. Dutie.

of the word of God. This reſtraint of our naturall deſire is two-fold: by the Law, and by the Goſpell. In the Law every commandement miniſtreth his particular reſtraint, as wee ſhall ſee in their order.

How the Law reſtraines our naturall deſires in the firſt Commandement.

The firſt Commandement concernes *the having of the true God for our God*. By nature we take liberty to our ſelves to conceive of God at our owne pleaſure: for commonly men conceive of God out of the Trinity, and worſhip the perſons one without another: the Jew, the Turke, and all the heathen will not be reſtrained of this liberty: but the people of God who ſubmit themſelves to his word, they by this law are reſtrained of this naturall deſire, and are taught to chuſe and have to themſelves the true God for their God; and to conceive aright of this God; namely, that hee is one in eſſence and three in perſon, and that the perſons muſt be worſhipped in the unity of the godhead: for as they are one in nature, ſo we muſt unite them in one and the ſame worſhip. Againe, by nature wee take liberty to our ſelves to forget the true God, and in our owne hearts doe ſet up a falſe god unto our ſelves: ſome make riches their God, ſome honours, ſome pleaſures: for looke whereon a man beſtowes his heart and his affections, as his love, his feare, and confidence, that he makes his god: and hence it comes that ſome in judgement hold the true God, and yet have a falſe god unto themſelves in their hearts: but the firſt Commandement reſtrains us of this liberty alſo: and it injoynes us to beſtow our whole heart, and all our affections on the true God: loving, fearing, and truſting in him above all. Thirdly, our nature is to exalt our ſelves and to aſcribe ſomething unto our ſelves, eſteeming the good things that be in us, as of our ſelves, and as though they were our owne: whereby we take to our ſelves ſomething that is proper to God, becomming like to the prodigall child which would have his portion to himſelfe ſevered from his father. With this naturall pride was *David* puffed up, when he numbred the people. But the firſt Commandement reſtraines us of this alſo, preſcribing unto us the duty of inward adoration; which wee performe, firſt, when we give unto him all the honour that we can, eſteeming our ſelves but duſt and aſhes, and aſcribing unto him all the good that is in us, as from him: ſecondly, when we ſubject our ſelves unto him wholly as to our Creator, and doe ſubmit our hearts, will, and conſcience to his holy word: and theſe be the ſtrait wayes which this commandement preſcribes us.

Reſtraints in the ſecond Commandement.

The ſecond Commandement concernes Gods *outward worſhip*: and it puts unto us many reſtraints. Our nature deſires to conceive of God in ſome forme, and to repreſent him in ſome image; but the Lord is a Spirit, and this Commandement injoynes us to worſhip him *in Spirit and truth*, and to conceive of him in his workes and properties, reſtraining our naturall deſires of conceiving and repreſenting God.

Secondly, it is our nature to performe outward worſhip unto God only, but for any further thing we would take libertie to our ſelves; we would give him only the outward bodily worſhip, as come to Church, heare the Word, pray outwardly, and receive the Sacraments: but the Lord in this commandement gives us charge, that with as great care and conſcience, wee would give unto him the inward worſhip of the heart; for God muſt bee ſerved with the whole man, our love, and feare, and truſt in God, muſt bee conformable to our outward worſhip. Further, everie man almoſt can bee content to profeſſe religion, and to performe ſo much as the Lawes of his countrey require for the ſervice of God; but yet they would take libertie in their callings, to live as they liſt: but Gods commandement reſtraines this deſire alſo. Wee muſt hold religion not only in the Church, but alſo ſhew the ſame in our lives and converſations; and therefore is the ſecond Table joyned with the firſt, to teach us that we muſt performe dutie to God in the ſervice of man.

Reſtraints in the third Commandement.

The third commandement concernes *the holy uſe of the holy things of God*, eſpecially of his Word and Sacraments. Now for the outward worke of hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments, we are content to performe them; but we would have God thinke himſelfe ſatiſfied with the worke done. But this commandement reſtraines us of this deſire, injoyning us not only to uſe his holy things, but alſo in an holy manner; that is, with repenting and beleeving hearts: for they are not holy to us, unleſſe wee uſe them in and by faith and repentance. Againe, wee take libertie to uſe Gods name in oathes, and ſpecially in vowes, as in baptiſme, which wee renue when wee come to the Lords Table: but herein wee ordinarily abuſe this his holy name, not having like care to make good our vowes unto God, as we have to make them.

Reſtraines in the fourth Commandement.

The fourth Commandement concernes the *time of Gods worſhip*: we our ſelves would have all times in our owne diſpoſing, and we thinke it hard to bee reſtrained of any time; but this Commandement reſtraines us of this deſire, binding us in conſcience to give one day in ſeven to the honour of God, in his publike and ſolemne worſhip.

Reſtraints in the fifth Commandement.

The fifth Commandement concernes the *giving of honour and reverence to Superiours*: and it reſtraines us of our naturall deſire, which is to ſeeke for, and to take honour unto our ſelves alone: for this injoyneth us to give honour one to another, eſpecially to them to whom it belongs, as to all ſuperiours in authoritie, in gifts, or age: let this be your honour, ſaith *Paul, to give honour to whom it belongs*, Rom. 13. 7.

Reſtraints in the ſixth Commandement.

The ſixth Commandement concerneth *murther*; and it reſtraineth our naturall deſire, which is, upon ſmall occaſion, to conceive malice and to beare grudging againſt our brother, forbidding

ding all thoughts, words, deeds, and gestures, which tend to the impaining or destroying of our neighbours life and person.

The seventh Commandement concerneth *chastitie:* and it restraines mans nature, which desires to take libertie in uncleannesse and fornication both of heart and life: and it binds us to abstaine from all speech, action, or gesture, which tends to the hindrance of our owne, or of our neighbours chastitie: for God is holy and pure, and so ought our bodies and minds to be, which are temples of his blessed Spirit.

The eighth Commandement concerneth our *neighbours goods:* and it restraines our corrupt nature, which desires to have libertie by all meanes good and bad to inrich our selves. And it injoyneth us both in will and word, and in trafficke also, to seeke the common good; and the good of those with whom we live. Againe, this also restraines our natu all desire of abundance, injoyning us to seeke only for necessaries, as food and rayment: for we may not seeke to be rich, yet if God give us more than things necessarie in the labours of our calling, then wee are to blesse God for them, and to use them to his glorie: this is a strait way to the worldly man, but it must stand, and we must walke in it, if we would enter into life.

The ninth Commandement concernes our neighbours *good name:* and it restraines us of our naturall desire, which is to conceive and speake unto others, as also to receive from others, evill report of our neighbour: and on the contrarie it injoynes us, by all good meanes to seeke to preserve our neighbours good name and credit.

The tenth Commandement is touching *lust.* When as we hurt no man in word or deed, then wee take it for granted, that wee may thinke what we will, no lawes restraine thought; that we hold to be free. But this Commandement restraines the verie first motions of our hearts, which tend to hurt our brothers life, chastitie, goods, or good name, though they never come into practice, yea, though we never give consent of will thereto. And these are the restraints of the Law, whereto we must conforme our selves, if we would enter into life.

Now follow the restraints of the Gospell, which is a part of Gods word touching remission of sins and salvation. By nature wee desire to stand upright and righteous before God by some good thing in our selves: as the rich man in the Gospell, hee demands of Christ, *What good thing shall I doe to be saved?* Againe, it is our nature not to look to be saved by any thing out of our selves; if we have nothing else, our good meaning and good hope must save us: but the Gospell restraines us of these desires, and injoyneth us to renounce our selves in the matter of salvation, and all that is in us: and to depend on a righteousnesse out of our selves in the person of Christ, which is his obedience and suffering. Againe, wee naturally desire to enjoy Gods mercie by sense and feeling; but the Gospell restraines us of this kinde of assurance, which comes by sense and feeling, and injoynes us to hold and keepe Gods mercie by beleeving only, both in life and death, though wee have no sense thereof at all.

Further, the Gospell renues the Law for the manner of loving: for the Morall Law required that we should love another as wee doe our selves, but the Gospell requires us to love one another as Christ loved us; which is a greater measure of love than the Law required. For Christ loved us more than himselfe; for he gave himselfe for us: and so ought wee to love even our enemies. And thus we see how the Gospell also restraines us from following our owne naturall desiers, and injoyneth us to walke in the narrow way to life: whereto, as also to the restraints of the Law, wee must apply our selves, our thoughts, words, and deeds: so doing wee walke in the strait way that leadeth unto life: but if we any way exempt our selves according to our naturall desire from any of these restraints, wee then walke in the broad way that leadeth to destruction.

II. Duie. Seeing we must be content with the straitnesse of the way, we learne, that when God layes any crosses or afflictions upon us, we must not repine or grudge, but beare the same with patience, and suffer God to breake us of our owne wills, resting contented in our selves with the will of God alone: for this is grace, and a sure testimony that we walke in the strait way to life.

III. Duie. In the case of confession and profession of true religion, when wee be called thereto, we must bee content to forsake goods, friends, yea, and life it selfe, rather than by enjoying them suffer our selves to bee driven out of this strait way to life: *My life* (saith *Paul*) *is not deare unto mee, so that I may fulfill my course with joy,* Acts 20. 24.

Lastly, whosoever is puffed up with the pride of his owne heart, is too stately to stoope under the strait doore that leadeth to the way of life: he therefore that would walke in this strait way, must cast away all pride of heart, and humble himselfe for his owne sins, making himselfe nothing in himselfe: Mat. 18. 3, 4. *Except you be converted and become as little children,* (who are not proud and hawty) *yee cannot enter into the kingdome of heaven: But he that humbleth himselfe as this little childe, the same is the greatest in the kingdome of heaven.*

The third charge given us by our Saviour Christ concerning the strait way of life, is noted by Saint *Luke*; *that wee must strive to enter into it.* From whence wee are taught, that our principall care must bee above all things to come into the way of life everlasting: so much the word *striving* imports. It is said, that when *John* first preached, *the kingdome of heaven suffered violence, and the violent tooke it by force:* that is, there was such forwardnesse

Suffer affliction patiently.

Ordinary in profession of the truth.

III. Charge. Strive to enter.

Matth. 11. 12.

nesse and zeale in them that heard *John* preach, to procure to themselves the kingdome of Heaven, that they strove most earnestly to get in. *David sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the mightie God of Iacob, that he would not enter into the Tabernacle of his house, nor come upon his bed, nor suffer his eyes to sleepe, till hee had found a place for Gods Arke:* where hee with the rest of his people might come and pray unto the Lord, and receive answer from him againe. Now looke what zeale was in them that heard *John*, and what care was in *David* for the outward place of Gods worship, the like must bee in everie one of us for the obtaining of reconciliation and life everlasting.

Psal. 132. 2, 3, 4, 5.

Securitie condemned.

Vses. I. Hereby many that live in the Church of God may justly be reproved: for a number there be that though they may partake of the Word and Sacraments, yet are most negligent of their salvation, using no meanes to obtaine reconciliation with God, and to come by life everlasting: and this they do professe, that they will leave all to God, relying wholly on his mercie without using any meanes on their parts to attaine thereto. But these men sinne most grievously, and are their owne deadly enemies: for they ought to consider this Commandement, which condemneth their securitie, and straitly injoynes everie one, to strive to come into the strait way, and to walke therein.

Motives to strive.

And because this duie is so necessarie, I will use some reasons to persuade them hereto.

1. The danger of securitie. Iudg. 16. 29, 30.

I. Consider this, when the Philistims were assembled, and had *Sampson* in the midst among them to make them sport, if they had knowen what hee was about to doe, when hee leaned to the pillars of the house where they sate, they would have preased to the doores and windowes, and there have striven to have got out, because of the imminent danger that was unto their bodily lives: well, all those persons that are cold in their profession, and careless of religion, they have the wrath of God hanging over their heads; and while they walke thus dissolutely in the broad way, their condemnation sleepeth not, but makes post-haste upon them: and if they continue and goe forward in this careless course, they shall as certainely perish in Gods wrath, as the Philistims did by the hand of *Sampson:* and therefore as they desire to scape damnation, so let them bee carefull to cast off this damnable securitie.

The assurance of the penitents.

II. Reason. If an Angell from Heaven should come and assure us from God, that life everlasting did belong unto us; oh wee would count it a blessed message: well, looke when we turne from the broad way, and walke in the strait way of life, wee have as good securitie of our salvation, as if an Angell from Heaven should certifie us thereof: for *true repentance* is an infallible note of a childe of God, to whom belongs the kingdome of Heaven. The consideration whereof ought to stirre up all careless persons to returne from their evill wayes, and to strive to come into this strait way, and to walke therein unto the end.

Excuses of secure persons removed.

And yet to induce them further to this duie, I will seeke to take from them those excuses which they make to themselves: First, they say, *God is merciful*; and therefore they will rele theron, and take no further care for their soules. *Ans.* God indeed is merciful: but his mercie is only found of them that strive to enter in at the strait gate; as for those that walke in the broad way, it belongs not to them: Deut. 26. 19, 20. And *if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appeare,* 1 Pet. 4. 18. Secondly, they say, at least in heart, that it is the easiest matter in the world to come by life everlasting: if they can call on God when they are dying, all is well: and therefore they will not lend their outward eares to heare, nor apply their minides to conceive and learne that which they may doe by nature: and if they doe come to the congregation, yet it is for custome or for feare of punishment, not for conscience. But these men deceive themselves: they consider not what *Peter* saith, *that the righteous shall hardly be saved:* and what S. *Luke* addeth to this exhortation of Christ, that *Many shall seeke to enter into the doore of life, and shall not be able*; because they neglected the time of grace, and used not good meanes in due season. Thirdly, they make this common objection, that either they are elect or reprobate: if they be elect, then let them live as they list, they shall be saved: but if God have eternally rejected them, though they live never so religiously, yet they shall bee condemned: and many deceive themselves with this reason. But they must know, that they judge amisse of Gods decree, and the wickednesse of this reason may appeare by the like: God hath decreed the certaine terme of everie mans life in this world, as well as his future estate after this life. Now if any man hereupon should reason thus; If God have decreed that I shall live longer, then I shall surely live: if he have decreed that I shall live no longer, then I shall surely die, for Gods decree must stand; and therefore I will neither eat, nor drinke, nor sleepe, nor use meanes to preserve my life: if any should thus doe upon this ground, would not all men judge him to be a murtherer of himselfe? And surely, he is no lesse a murtherer of his soule, that upon Gods predestination, will take occasion of libertie, to live as he list; for Gods decree of the end includes the ordinarie meanes that bring thereto. Againe, they are to know, that there is a double will of God; his revealed will made knowen in his Word, and his secret or unrevealed will, whereby hee hath determined with himselfe what shall be the eternall estate of everie person, which is not knowen unto us ordinarily, but by the event. The revealed will of God must bee the rule of our obedience, and according to it must we frame and square our lives; but his secret will wee must honour and reverence, not making any rules from it, whereby

2. Excuse.

3. Excuse, from Gods predestination.

to

to ſhame our lives. Now theſe perſons they leave the written Word, and betake themſelves to his untevealed will, and out of it will make rules how they will live; but herein they ſinne greatly, in framing to themſelves new rules, leaving his Word, whereby they ſhould order and guide their lives. Thirdly, I anſwer that this reaſon hath in it a plaine falſhood: for they that are predeſtinate to life, are cheſen to live a godly life, in faith, repentance, and obedience, *that they might be like to the image of his Sonne*, Rom. 8. 29. And indeed it is impoſſible, that hee which lives in wickednesse all his life long, and ſo dies, ſhould bee ſaved: as alſo that hee which lives a godly life unto the end, ſhould be condemned: for God hath decreed the meanes, as well as the end.

II. Vſe. This charge of Chriſt, for *ſtriving to enter in at the ſtrait doore*, correcteth alſo a ſecond ſort of men, which are of the better ſort; for commonly the beſt men are too careleſſe in regard of this dutie of *ſtriving*: and it may bee ſaid of us, as Chriſt ſaid of the Church of Laodicea, Revel. 3. 15. *We are neither hot nor cold*: we ſtrive not to goe one before another in holy duties, worldly cares and pleaſures doe dull us and make us faint in this dutie of ſtriving. But wee muſt take heed of ſecuritie, and revive our obedience to this commandement, making this our principall care, to come to life eternall: and all worldly care muſt come under this; for conſider the fearefull judgement that hangs over ſuch as are ſlacke in this dutie; it is deſtruction as well as to thoſe that are prophane: *becauſe thou art neither hot nor cold, I will ſpue thee out of my mouth*; for ſeeing that God continues his Goſpell unto us, wee ought anſwerably to increaſe in knowledge, in faith, and in all obedience. *David* profeſſeth, that *his heart brake in ſunder for the deſire that hee had to Gods judgements alway*, Pſal. 119. 20. We commonly ſpend our wit and ſtrength about worldly affaires, in matter of commoditie and delight: but *Davids* practice ought to bee a patterne unto us; for our chieſeſt ſtrife muſt be to attaine eternall life.

v. 15 *Beware of falſe Prophets, which come to you in ſheepes cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

The meaning of the Text.

From this verſe to the twentieth is contained the ſixth part of this Chapter, and the eleventh part of Chriſts Sermon, concerning the diſcerning and avoiding of falſe Prophets. And it hath an excellent dependence on the former point of exhortation; for having given commandement to walke in the ſtrait way, now like a careſull guide hee forewarnes us of the principall impediments in this way, which be falſe Prophets and Seducers, who are like Theeves and Pyrats to hinder us in this way. Touching them three things are here ſet downe by Chriſt; Firſt, a *commandement*, to *beware of them*: Secondly, the *danger* that comes by them; *they come in ſheepes cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*: And thirdly, the meanes whereby to judge and diſcerne of them; from the 16. verſe to the 20.

Who makes a falſe Prophet.

For the commandement: *Beware of falſe Prophets*: that is, of falſe Teachers. In a falſe Teacher two things are required; Firſt, hee muſt maintaine ſome errour that overturnes true faith and religion: for everie erroneous opinion which a man holds, will not make him a falſe Prophet, but only a fundamentall errour. Secondly, beſides the holding of ſome damnable errour in his owne heart, a falſe Prophet muſt alſo be a Seducer, ſuch an one as labors to make a faction, withdrawing men from true religion, and from true faith, and perſwading them both in private and publikely, to receive his errour. And that both theſe are required to make a falſe Prophet, the Scripture is plaine; *There ſhall be falſe teachers among you* (ſaith S. *Peter*) *which privily ſhall bring in damnable hereſies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. There is the firſt propertie: and for the ſecond, that they muſt bee *ſeducers*, Chriſt himſelfe teacheth us, Matth. 24. 24. *There ſhall come falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſignes and wonders, ſo as if it were poſſible, they ſhould deceive the verie elect*. And of both theſe properties joyntly S. *Paul* ſpeaketh, Rom. 16. 17. *I beſeech you brethren, marke them diligently which cauſe diviſion and offences, contrarie to the doctrine which yee have received, and avoid them; for they that are ſuch, ſerve not the Lord, but their owne belies, and with faire ſpeech and flattering deceive the hearts of the ſimple*. So then Chriſts meaning in this commandement is this: You ſhall bee troubled with many falſe Prophets, which ſhall bring in damnable doctrines amongſt you, and withall labour to ſeduce you from the truth, and therefore take heed of them.

Falſe Prophets differ from the Schiſmatikes.

And theſe two notes muſt wee marke in a falſe Teacher, to diſtinguiſh him from a Schiſmatike, and from an Hypocrite; for everie falſe Teacher is a Schiſmatike, but everie Schiſmatike is not a falſe Teacher. If wee would have examples of falſe Teachers, behold the *Ieſuites* and *Romiſh Prieſts*, for they come among us, and bring falſe doctrine, with intent to deceive and ſeduce our people. Such likewiſe are the *Family of love*, and ſuch were the Arrians in time paſt, that denied the Godhead of Chriſt: as for others that hold private errours, not raſing the foundation, nor ſeeking to ſeduce others, they may bee Hypocrites, Schiſmatikes, and bad Chriſtians, but they are not falſe Prophets. Thus much for the meaning of the commandement.

Ieſuites and Prieſts are falſe Teachers.

Familiſts and Arrians.

The Vſes. 1. By this caveat Chriſt would teach us, that the Devill ſhewes his exceeding great malice againſt Gods Church & people in theſe laſt times of the world; he ſubornes falſe

5 caut. to bee againſt the Church.

Teachers

Teachers to bring in damnable doctrine, and moves them to ſeduce men from true Religion. This thing Chriſt did plainly foretell, Mat. 24. 24. and Saint *Paul* chargeth the Elders of Epheſus *to take heed unto themſelves, and to their flocks: for I know* (ſaith he) *that after my departing ſhall grievous wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the flocks. Moreover, of your owne ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw Diſciples after them*. And Saint *Peter* foretells of the like, as wee heard before, 2 Pet. 2. 1. The truth hereof is verified by experience; for in the firſt foure hundred years after Chriſt, which were the prime and chieſeſt times of the Church, there aroſe fourteeſcore and eight ſeverall kinds of falſe Prophets, which ſeduced men from the faith and true Religion, and prevailed greatly. And no doubt in the end of the world, Satan will now ſhew his malice as great againſt the Church as hee did then: and therefore Chriſt bids, *Take heed of them*. And for this cauſe, when wee ſee men that profeſſe Religion, fall away to hereſie, and be corrupted, ſeeking alſo to ſeduce others, wee muſt not much marvell at it, or be thereby diſcouraged; but rather watch more carefully, for the Devill will ſtirre up falſe prophets daily to deceive the Church of God.

Act. 20. 28, 29, 30.

The abundance of hereſies in the primitive Church.

Our weakneſſe in the faith.

II. Inſtruction. From this commandement wee may alſo ſee that wee are feeble, full of weakneſſe in the faith, ſo as a little thing will eaſily make us forſake our faith and true Religion; if this were not ſo, what ſhould we need this exhortation? Who was more courageous and forward in profeſſion than *Peter*? and yet the voice of a filly damoſell made him deny his Maſter, and to forſweare his faith and religion. The Galatians received the Goſpell ſo gladly from *Paul* at the firſt, that he profeſſeth, *They would have plucked out their owne eyes to have done him good*; and yet when he writ unto them, he *wonders they were ſo ſoone fallen to another Goſpell*, receiving the doctrine of juſtification by works. Yea, this ſheweth, that we have itching eares, whereby we will readily and willingly receive wholſome doctrine for a time, but ſoone after deſire new doctrine againe, like unto the Jewes, who for *a while delighted in the light of Iohns miniſtery*, Joh. 5. 35. and to the old Iſraelites, who liked Manna at the firſt, but after a while were wearie of it, and complained that their ſoule dried away, whereupon they luſted after the fleſh-pots of Ægypt againe. So wee at the firſt did willingly receive the Goſpel of Chriſt: but now many wax wearie with it, and begine to like of Popiſh doctrine, preferring their corrupt writers, before thoſe that have beene the reſtorers of true Religion unto us.

Gal. 4. 15.

Gal. 1. 6.

Our itching humour in matters of religion.

Wee are feeble againſt the faith.

III. Inſtruct. We muſt labour to maintaine faith and good conſcience, and not ſuffer our lives to bee drowne there-from: by Gods mercy we have had the Goſpell of truth among us a long time, and doe ſtill enjoy it; for which we have great cauſe to praiſe the name of God, and in this regard we muſt labor to be conſtant in holding it, yea, to live and die with it. This is the principall point which Chriſt here taimes at, and therefore we muſt careſully learne it: and for this purpoſe let us remember theſe particular directions which follow: Firſt, that God having reſtored unto us true Religion, doth require wee ſhould love it as the chieſeſt treaſure that ever this kingdome enjoyed. Wicked *Ahab* could not abide [a] *Elias* and [b] *Michaiah* Gods Prophets, but hated them; for which cauſe God left him to himſelfe, and ſuffered him to be ſeduced by foure hundred falſe Prophets of *Baal*, and thereby brought him to deſtruction. And the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the kingdome of *Antichriſt*, ſaith, that *God herein gives men up to ſtrong illuſions, that they ſhould believe lies, becauſe they have not loved the truth*. 2 Theſſ. 2. 10, 11. Now this love we muſt ſhew by our obedience in duties of piety to God, and in the exercise of juſtice and mercy towards our brethren, elſe God will tranſlate his Goſpell from us, and give it to a Nation that will bring forth the fruits thereof.

Direction to preſerve the truth.

a 1 King. 22. 20.
b Chap. 18. 8.

A ſecond rule to be obſerved for the maintaining of true religion is this: that Miniſters eſpecially, and thoſe that intend that calling, ſhould highly eſteeme, and reverently account of thoſe men and their writings, which by Gods mercy have beene the meanes to reſtore unto us pure religion: for though they were men ſubject to error, and in ſome things might ſlip, yet they were the worthy inſtruments of Gods mercy, for the planting of his Goſpell among us, which ſince their time hath beene ſealed with the bloud of many Martyrs, in England, Germany, and elſe-where: in which regard, though wee muſt onely depend on the pure Word of God for certainty of truth, yet we are to give much unto them, and to be followers of them for the ſubſtance of Religion, wherein they doe moſt ſoundly conſent in one truth. This I note, becauſe they begin to be in diſgrace with many, and corrupt Popiſh writers are farre better accounted of.

2 Rule. Reſtorers of religion ought to be had in account.

Thirdly, if any among us doubt of any point in Religion, let him doe theſe two things for his reſolution, which are the ordinary meanes to know the truth; Firſt, let him ſearch the holy Scriptures diligently, not by private ſtudie onely, but by conference with the godly. Secondly, let him in true humility of heart pray unto God for the illumination of his Spirit, whereby he may in minde rightly conceive of the truth, embrace it by faith in his heart, and honour it by obedience in his life: thus doing conſtantly, and in ſincerities, he ſhall be ſure to be preſerved from error, both finall and fundamentall, and in due time ſhall know the truth; for the promiſe is, *Aske, and ye ſhall have: ſeeke, and ye ſhall finde*, ver. 12. and S. *Iames* ſaith, *If any man lacke wiſdome* neceſſary for his ſalvation, *let him aske of God*, uſing with all other

3 Rule. How to know the truth in religion.

Iam. 1. 5.

lawfull meanes to come thereby, and it shall be given unto him. Hereto may be added this good help for satisfaction in this ase of doubting: namely, to have recourse to the generall confessions of reformed Churches, which may be had in that notable booke, *The Harmonie of Confessions*: for although private men may erre, as also particular Churches, not onely severally, but joyntly in some things in this world; yet the generall consent of reformed Churches, may be a good direction to the knowledge of the truth, and a good persuasion to constancy therein.

Fourthly, we *must keepe a good conscience*, if we would preserve the truth and purity of religion; for faith and good conscience goe alwaies together: whereupon S. *Paul* perswading *Timothy* to this duty, bids him *have faith and a good conscience, which some have put away, and as concerning faith have made shipwracke*, 1 Tim. 1. 19. where a good conscience is resembled to a ship, which saileth over the sea of this world, being laden with faith; that is, with true religion, and other spirituall graces needfull to salvation. Now if the ship of our conscience bee crasie and unsound, then is our faith and salvation in great danger: and therefore wee must endevour in all things to have a cleare conscience, both towards God and towards men.

IV. Instruct. This commandement of our Saviour Christ, to *beware of false Prophets*, doth barre the Church of God, and every member thereof, from conversing with false Prophets, after they bee convicted to bee such. It was *Eves* fault to admit conference with the Devill in the serpent, and all of us feele the smart thereof at this day. It was *Pauls* counsell to the Romans, to *marke them diligently which caused division and offences among them, contrary to the doctrine which they had learned*, and to avoid them: and Saint *John* plainly forbids this society with them, 2 Epist. ver. 10. *Receive not him into thine house, neither bid him God speed*, that *comes* to teach you, and *brings not this doctrine*: yea, *though we* (saith *Paul*) *or an Angel from heaven teach you otherwise than that which we have preached unto you, hold him accursed*, Galat. 1. 8. In the histories of the Church it is recorded, that S. *John* would not wash himselfe in the same bath, wherein *Cerinthus* an heretike was washing himselfe, nor abide under the same roofe, but leaped out, and perswaded others so to doe. And indeed by *Eves* example we may see the danger of conference with false prophets; for the same evill spirit speakes in them.

Now this shewes, first, that the practice of many students is dangerous, and against this commandement, who take delight in Popish Commentaries and Postils, ascribing to them more learning and judgement, than can bee found in those writers that were the restorers of true religion unto vs: and hence it is, that they labour more in them than in the Scripture it selfe, or in other sound writers thereupon. But if there be any false prophet at this day, it is the Papist, and their writings are dangerous to bee read of those that are not well grounded in the truth; for by reading we have a kind of familiarity with them, and indeed many sucke out of them at unawares, much venome in weightie points of doctrine and religion. We ought rather to doe with them, as the beleevers of *Ephesus* did with their books of curious arts; namely, *bring them out and burne them*, than take such delight in them: albeit this must be granted, it is both lawfull and necessary for the defence of the truth, that men of sound judgement and piety doe labour in them.

Secondly, hence also it may appeare, that it cannot be but a great hinderance to true religion, that hereticall books may be publikely sold to any one that will buy them, without due consideration whether the partie have gifts to discerne of truth from falshood: in the Popish Church they are more carefull, they permit not a man to read an heretikes booke (as they call us Protestants) without leave, and that under a great penaltie, which is severely inflicted upon offenders that way.

V. Instruct. This commandement also sheweth, that it is not lawfull to grant to any man, or to any people, the liberty of their owne conscience in the matters of religion, permitting them to professe what religion they will; for how should false prophets bee avoided, when every man may freely professe what he will in religion? All governours therefore must follow the practice of good King *Iosias, who assembled all Iuda, and caused all his people to heare the Word of the Lord, and to stand to that religion which the booke of God made knowne unto them*, 2 Chro. 34. 32.

V. Doctr. Wee have from this commandement, an answer to the false charge of the Church of Rome, who accuse us of schisme and apostacy because we separate from their church. But we must know, that the schisme and apostacie is there where the cause of departing is; which indeed is not in us, who doe no more herein but obey this commandement of Christ: the cause is in them who are become false prophets, whom we must avoid.

Here yet two questions may be demanded: 1. whether a false Prophet may be put to death, seeing Christ bids onely to beware of them? *Answer.* Christ here speakes to his Apostles, and to other of his auditors, that were private men, whose duty raught no further; but yet the truth is, that a false prophet being judicially convicted, is to be put to death: the word of God elsewhere is plaine, Levit. 24. 14. there is both a commandement and a practice, *Every blasphemer must die*. This wicked *Iezabel* knew well, who under pretence of blasphemy, caused *Naboth* to bee put to death: and hereupon the Jewes sought to put Christ to death.

Yea,

A — Acts 19. 19.

B — Free sale of hereticall books is dangerous.

C — Toleration of false Religion unlawfull.

D — To separate from Rome, no schisme.

Whether a false Prophet should be put to death.

1 King. 21. 10, 13.

Dan. 3. 29.

Yea, *Nabuchadnezzar* an heathen King, having but a taste of this, that the God of Israel was the true God, made this law, that *whosoever blasphemed the God of Israel should die*. And it stands with equity; for he that reviles his lawfull Prince must die, and that justly; how much more then ought he to die that blasphemes the living God, who is King of Kings? Now every false prophet is a blasphemer; for his opinions are blasphemies against the truth of God: and therefore hee ought to die. The expresse will of God herein is manifest, Deut. 13. beginning. *A Prophet comes and workes miracles, and showes signes that come to passe, yet if hee thereupon entice the people to idolatry, hee must be slaine*: and this is one way whereby the civill Magistrate must helpe the people to avoid a false Prophet.

II. Quest. Why doth God then suffer such to live in his Church as doe seduce men? *Ans.* For two causes; First, that such as hold the truth in sincerity may be knowne, 1 Cor. 11. 19. Secondly, for the punishment of the wicked and ungodly, who receive not the love of the truth; *to seduce them by strong illusions, and to cause them to beleeve lies.*

2 Thess. 2. 11, 12.

Danger of false Prophets.

The second point; *The danger of false Prophets: they come in sheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.* In these words Christ alludeth to the practice of false prophets in former times, who counterfeited the true Prophets in their attire: for the ancient Prophets were usually cloathed in rough and course attire. *Elias* in regard of his garments, is called *an hairie man*, 2 King. 1. 8. and *John Baptist had his garment of camels haire*, Mar. 1. 4. And the false prophets did counterfeit the true Prophets in their attire for this end; that they might the more easily deceive the people, as is most plaine, Zach. 13. 4. where the Lord saith of false Prophets, *That they shall weare a rough garment to deceive*: for when they wore such course attire, made either of sheepe skinnes, or sheepes wooll, wherewith the true Prophets were usually cloathed, they sought hereby to perswade the people, that they had the hearts of the true Prophets; when as indeed they were full fraught with damnable errors. Now Christs meaning in this allusion, is to shew that false prophets have plausible pretences for their damnable doctrine, and therefore are the more dangerous. Yet that wee may the better perceive the danger of false Prophets, I will a little stand to describe their *cloathing*; that is, their pretences of deceit. They may bee reduced to seven heads: the first is *allegation of Scripture*, which they will as often use as the true Prophet; and hereby they blinde the eyes of many. But the truth is, that in alleaging Scripture, they deprave and change the sense, and either adde to, or detract from the words, following rightly their master Satan, Matth. 4. 6. who alleaged Scripture to Christ, but left out the principal point whereto the promise was made:

Why God suffers false Prophets.

Satan pretences of false Prophets. 1. Allegation of Scripture.

namely, walking *in thy waies*. And thus deale the Papists at this day, sometimes they mangle the Text, and alter the sense, sometime they leave the Scripture, and goe to traditions, to Councels and Fathers. This also is the practice of the Familie of love, and of the Anabaptists, who turne the naturall sense of Scripture into mysticall allegories.

The second cloake or pretence, is *the depth of their learning*, Revel. 2. 24. the heresie of the Nicolaitans was by themselves called *profound learning*, but by the holy Ghost, *the deepnesse of Satan*. So play the Papists at this day, for sundry poiurs of their religion: for they hold, that because the Church in the Apostles time was weake in knowledge, and feeble in faith, therefore the Apostles omitted sundry deepe points, especially concerning the Masse, which yet the Church receiving by tradition, doth now teach plainly and fully. But though they match these doctrines of the Church with the holy Scripture, yet wee need not to trouble our selves therewith; for in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles all things necessarie to salvation are made knowne, and we must not receive any doctrine that cannot be confirmed thence: and therefore in the parable, Luk. 16. 3. *Abraham* preferres *Moses* and the *Prophets*, before visions and revelations from the dead.

2 Deepe learning.

Rhem. on Heb. 5. sect. 8.

Conc. Trid. sess. 4. decr. 2.

The third cloake and pretence, *To assume to themselves the persons and titles of most worthy men*: 2 Cor. 11. 13. *Paul* speakes of such deceivers that tooke to them the *name of the Apostles of Christ*, therein following their master Satan, *who can transforme himselfe into an angel of light*. See this in the Papists, especially in the Pope, who will be *Christs Vicar, Peters successor, and the servant of servants*. The doctors call themselves *Seraphicall* and *Angelicall* doctors, & the Church of Rome must be the true Church: but all this is but counterfeit deceit, for succession in place only, from *Peter*, and from Christ himselfe, is no certaine note of truth. The Scribes and Pharisies had their succession from *Aaron*, appointed by God, and yet Christ bids his Disciples *take heed of the leaven of their doctrine*, Mat. 16. 12. and calls them *The blinde leaders of the blinde*. Succession then in true doctrine is the only and sure note of true religion.

3 Goodly titles.

The fourth cloake or pretence is *forged and counterfeit humilitie*: this *Paul* notes in false Apostles among the Colossians; First, they would not worship God directly, but in and by the Angels: Secondly, they used much bodily exercise, afflicting their own bodies: and thirdly, their worship was will-worship, devised by themselves. If we would have a lively example hereof, beholde the Romish Priests; they come to God in the mediation of Saints: their whole religion stands in bodily exercises, so as many of their orders are famous for their whippings, and such like trumperie; and their worship of God is will-worship, devised by men.

The fift pretence is *working miracles*: hereby they

4 Fained humility. Colos. 2. 18. and 23.

5 Working miracles.

they labour to confirme their doctrine, 2 Thes. 2.9. The comming of Antichrist that man of sinne is with signes and lying wonders, through Satans working, and of such God forwarnes his people, Deut. 13. that they should not bee drawne to idolatry for a miracle: for either they be false miracles, and lying wonders, or if they be true miracles (as God may suffer such to be wrought by false Prophets, for the plague and punishment of the unthankfull world) yet their end is to deceive, and to draw men into errour from the truth. Wee have ordinary experience of this pretence among the Romish Priests, who by forcerie cast out Devils, and cure strange diseases, and so delude the simple: but this must not draw us from the truth. A miraculous worke truly done, is not a sufficient warrant of a doctrine in religion; for true and sound doctrine may want this confirmation, Joh. 10.41. and false doctrine may have it, as Deut. 13.1,2,&c.

A

The sixth pretence is *faire speeches and blessings*, pretending the good and salvation of those to whom they come: see this, Rom. 16.18. *With faire speech and flattering* (saith *Paul* of false Apostles) *they deceive the hearts of the simple*: so dealt Satan with *Eve*, he made shew that he had some good thing to tell her, whereby their state might be bettered, but it turned to theirs and our destruction. So did the foure hundred false Prophets of Baal, contrary to the true Prophet *Michaiah*, prophesie good successe to *Ahab* in his war against the Aramites; but his hearkning to them cost him his life. And so dealt *Hanani* with the Jewes, when they were besieged by the King of Babels armie, contrary to *Jeremies* counsell: he prophesied peace and safety, but it turned both to his owne, and to their destruction, Jer. 28.1,2, &c.

B

The seventh pretence is *boldnesse and constancy in suffering for their opinions*: for a man in obstinacy may live and die for errour, as well as the childe of God may doe for the truth. Constancy in opinion is no sure note whereby to judge a true Prophet; for many Heretikes have suffered death constandently, for the maintenance of their damnable heresies.

Wee must preserve the purity of the truth.

Thus we see the pretences of false Prophets: now hereto we must adde this second point, to wit, that for all this they be but *wolves*, because by their damnable doctrine they seeke to poison and corrupt the soules of simple men. If it bee said, they have no such intent, they themselves thinke it to be the truth: *I answer*, that may be true in some, but this cleareth them not from being wolves: for the Devill that hath deluded them, who is their Lord and master, doth by them dangerously delude and deceive the simple.

The Vse. I. Considering this danger of false Prophets, we must practise Christs lesson, Mat. 10.16. *Be simple as Doves*, that is, be innocent and harmelesse, thinking evill of none, neither intending evill or offence to any, in thought, word, or deed: and yet we must be *wise as serpents*, who have great subtilty in saving and defending their head from harme: so must every one that lookes to be saved, labour for so much wisdome, whereby hee may preserve himselfe from the hurt of false Prophets. Now the beginning of this wisdome is to *feare God in his Word*, beleeving his promises, and obeying his commandements. The true feare of God is not without knowledge; and therefore everie one must labour to be instructed in the principles of Religion: for without knowledge wee cannot feare God, and so shall want true wisdome to eschew false Prophets.

II. In that the false teacher by so many faire shewes, seeke to bring in false doctrine, it is every mans dutie in his place to labour to preserve wholsome doctrine, and the puritie of true religion. This duty is necessary: for wee must be as forward for the truth, as the enemie is for falshood, and do as much for God, as they doe for the devill. Againe, no poison is more deadly to the body, than false doctrine is to the soule; therefore seeing God hath long blessed us with his truth, let us esteeme it above all outward blessings, and by seeking to preserve the purity thereof, shew our selves thankfull to God for the same.

C

v. 16 *Yee shall know them by their fruits; doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles?*

This verse, and those which follow to the 21. containe the third point which Christ layeth downe concerning false Prophets; namely, the meanes whereby we may discerne and judge of them. And herein he observeth this order; First, he gives us a notable rule to direct us in judging of false Prophets, *Ye shall know them by their fruits*. Secondly, he explaines the same rule by a similitude drawne from trees, *Doe men gather grapes of thornes, &c.*

D

For the rule, that we may understand it the better, we are to search what is meant by the fruits of false prophets. A false prophet must be considered two waies; First, as he is a man taking upon him the name & profession of Christ, for so false prophets use to doe: and secondly, as he is a false prophet: in both these respects he hath his fruits. As hee is a man taking upon him the profession of Christs Religion, he may bring forth many outward duties of externall obedience unto the morall law; but these fruits are not here meant: for a false prophet may dissemble much, and goe farre in the outward duties of Religion, so as he cannot bee discerned by his generall profession, or by the workes of his civill conversation. There bee other fruits which come from him as he is a false prophet, and by them must he bediscerned: these therefore are to be considered. Now we shall know them

Fruits of a true Prophet.

God calleth Prophets diversly.

them the better, by searching out the fruits of a true Prophet, as hee is a man of God appointed to teach Gods people.

A

The fruits of a true Prophet be principally three: I. He teacheth and preacheth in the name of God, by vertue of calling from God, and otherwise dares not presume to teach: Rom. 10. 14. *How shall he teach unlesse he be sent*: and the Author to the Hebrewes saith, *Christ tooke not the honour of being the high Priest and Prophet of the Church to himselfe, but was called thereto by his Father*, Heb. 5.5. And this stands with reason, for every true Prophet and teacher stands in Gods roome, and is Gods Ambassadour to deliver his will to his people: which thing none can doe, but he whom God calleth and sendeth for that purpose. Yet the calling of Prophets and teachers by God is diverse. Some are called by voice from God immediatly, as were *Abraham*, *Moses*, and *Samuel*: and all the Apostles in the new Testament by the immediate voice of Christ: for *Paul* was called by the voice of Christ from Heaven, Act. 9.4, 5, 6. Againe, others have their calling from God, by the speciall message of some Angell, or some men. Thus was *Aaron called by Moses*; *Elisha by Elias*; and *Philip* by an Angell, to preach to the Eunuch, Act. 8.26. Thirdly, others be called by the instinct and motion of Gods Spirit: so Act. 8. *Philip* was by ordinary calling a Deacon, but by extraordinary instinct he became an Evangelist, and a Preacher of the Gospell, for the building of Gods Church. These three kinds of calling men into the ministery were extraordinary, and are now ceased, and not to be looked for: neither are they to be regarded: which say they are thus called at this day. A fourth way whereby God now calleth Prophets and Teachers into his Church, is by his Church: for God hath given to particular Churches, a particular ministeriall power and fervice, whereby they may designe a place unto the Teacher, and also make manifest that God hath called him. Now this authority is but ministeriall, to designe and manifest whom God hath called, for the principall calling is from God: for Act. 20.18. the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, are said to bee *made overseers by the holy Ghost*: when as they were designed thereto by men. And by one of these foure waies are all true Prophets and Teachers called.

B

How the restorers of Religion from Popery were called.

Here some may demand, what kinde of calling had they, who were the first restorers of true religion unto us in this our age, for they were by profession, either popish Priests, or Schoole-doctors. Answer: their calling was partly ordinary, and partly extraordinary: for in the ministery of a Prophet there bee two things; his office, and the using or exercise of his office. Our first Ministers that restored the truth unto us, had but an ordinary office, being either Readers in Schooles, or publike preachers; also they had their outward calling thereto from the Church of Rome; so as if there be any part of good calling in that Church, then was their calling good: which may serve to stop the mouthes of all Papists that carpe at our Church, as though our Ministers had no calling. But for the using of their office, they were extraordinarily raised and stirred up to doe that which they did, in regard of the manifold abuses wherewith the ministerie of the Church was generally corrupted in their time: for God gave unto them grace and knowledge to discerne to teach, and to maintaine the right and true use of the ministerie. And that they were thus extraordinarily stirred up by God, may appeare by the extraordinarie gifts and graces wherewith they were endued: for God that hath alwaies a care over his Church, when hee saw the same so fearefully corrupted by *Antichrist*, did stirre up these men to reforme the same: and besides their singular gifts of knowledge and wisdome, he gave them extroordinarie graces of true piety, whereby they were inabled to seale and confirme with their owne bloud, the truth of that doctrine which they did professe and teach, which was an evident argument they were called of God.

C

1. Note of a false Prophet.

Now opposite to this, wee must make the first note of a false Prophet: namely to come on his owne head, and to preach not being sent. And by this marke are false Prophets noted, Jer. 14.14. *I have not sent them, neither did I command them--yet they prophesie in my name*. And no lesse doe these words of Christ import, when he saith here, *they come unto you*, that is, of themselves, without a calling from God, though they pretend a calling, which is one of their cloakes: and therefore by Saint *Iude*, verse 4. they are said to *creepe into the Church*: as also, Act. 20.29. grievous wolves shall enter in among you, without calling from God, or from the Church.

2. Note of a true Prophet.

Here some may aske, how shall we judge of such, and know that they have no calling? *Ans.* For this purpose, I adde a second note of a true Prophet, which is the most principall, and it standeth in the right and wholsome handling of the Scriptures of God. This is the proper fruit of a true Prophet, 1 Cor. 14.3. *He that prophesies, speaketh unto men edification, exhortation, and comfort*: and 2 Tim. 2.15. *Show thy self a good workeman, by dividing the Word of God aright*: and 2 Tim. 3.16, 17. the *Scripture used in teaching, convincing, correcting, and instructing unto righteousnesse, serves to make a man fit to every good worke of a Prophet*. Now this wholsome handling of the Word stands in two things; in a right interpretation and opening of the true sense of Scripture, and in a due and sound collection of wholsome doctrine from the same, for the edifying of the Church both in sound judgement and Christian life.

D

3. Note of a false Prophet.

On the contrary, the second fruit of a false Prophet is, to deliver and maintaine corrupt doctrine, contrary to the wholsome doctrine of holy Scripture: and by this principally he is to

be knowne for a false Prophet, that intruderh himselfe. For the better conceiving of this note we must know, that in the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, there are two things principally to bee considered; the scope, and the parts thereof: the scope of all their doctrin tends to maintaine Christ Jesus God and man, the alone perfect Saviour of the Church. And indeed, hee which teacheth any doctrine tending to overthrow Christ, either in regard of his natures, or of his offices, the same is a false Prophet: 1 Joh. 4.3. *Every spirit that confesseth not that Iesus is come in the flesh, is not of God.* The parts of Prophetically and Apostolike doctrine, are the commandements of the Law, and the promises of the Gospel, and he which overturnes either directly, or by just consequent, any commandement of the Law, or article of faith, must needs be a false Prophet: so that a false Prophet must be tried by the analogie of faith, comprised in the articles of the Apostles Creed, and in the Decalogue, which containes the summe of all the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles; and he which goeth against them, is a false Prophet.

The third fruit of a true Prophet, is noted by our Saviour Christ, namely, in his ministery to *seeke Gods glory*, Joh. 7. 18. Where also he noteth out a false Prophet, who in teaching and preaching seeketh not Gods glorie, but his owne. The same note doth *Paul* give, Phil. 3. 19. calling them *earthly minded*, seeking their owne honour, wealth, and glory, and not the things of God: and *They serve not the Lord, but their owne bellies.*

Thus we see the notes of a false Prophet, among which the second is the principall whereby he is to be tried: as we may see plainly, Deu. 13. 4. *If a false Prophet come, and worke a true signe, yet he must die, why his false doctrine bee seeke to withdraw Gods people from the true God.* So when the Jewes asked Christ, by what authority he did those things: that is, what warrant and calling he had to doe as he did; he answers them by another question, touching *Iohns* ministerie; thereby shewing, that that which hee did was warranted by the testimony of *Iohn*; and *Iohns* testimony was true, because his calling was from God: and his calling hee justifies, bona fide his doctrine (signified by his baptisme) was from God. So Gal. 1.8. *He which teacheth otherwise than they had learned* out of the Prophets from the Apostles, *let him be accursed*, though he were an *Angel from heaven.* And thus much for the meaning of this rule.

Vses 1. From this rule wee have to answer the Papists, and all popish persons, who use to plead in defence of their Religion, after this sort; *If our Religion bee false, shew me the time when it was corrupted, the man that corrupted it, and the manner how it was corrupted: for once we had the pure religion.* We might answer them by the like, that a man might say as well of a Ship that is sunke on the Sea, that it is not sunke, because no man can tell where, and when, and by what meanes it tooke water. But yet further wee have here to answer; that though we knew not when their Religion was corrupted, and by whom, yet seeing their teachers and people have in them, and among them, the necessarie fruits of Antichristian Prophets and people, we can thereby assure ourselves they are corrupt: and though wee cannot see the shadow of the Sunne move, yet we may perceive that it doth move. Now by their fruits it is cleare they are corrupt; for they reverse the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, both in the commandements of the Law, and in the Articles of faith. First, they disinull the first Commandement, by making to themselves other Gods beside the true God; for they [a] *pray unto Saints*, and therein acknowledge a divine propertie in them, and also give unto them the honour due to God alone, and so set up unto themselves the creature in the roome of the Creator. The second they reverse by worshipping [b] God himselfe, and dead men, in images, and Christ himselfe in the Crucifix; yea, in a peece of [c] bread, wherein they match the greatest idolatrie among the heathen: and the best learned among them teach, that the Rood, the [d] Crosse, and Crucifix, are to be worshipped with the same worship wherewith Christ himselfe is worshipped. In the sixth Commandement touching murther, they condemne the killing one of another; but yet if a Priest come from the Pope, and kill a Protestant Prince, the Lords anointed King or Queene, that is not onely no sinne, but a [e] *most notable, rare, and memorable worke.* Against the seventh Commandement they maintaine [f] the vow of single life necessarie in their religious orders; whereby, as also by their stues, they cause all filthinesse and abomination to abound amongst them. And for the tenth Commandement, they say [g] that concupiscence after baptisme is no sinne properly. In the Articles of faith they overturne those that concerne Christ, making him no Saviour, but a divine instrument whereby we save our selves; for they [h] make *mens good works done by Gods grace, after the first justification, truly and properly meritorious, and fully worthy of everlasting life.* And his offices they have parted from him; his kingly and prophetically offices, betweene him and the Pope: and his Priesthood between him and every Popish Priest, as we have shewed before: so that by these fruits wee plainly see their Apostacie; which is enough, though wee know not when and by whom it came.

2 *Vse.* Here also wee have to answer such among our selves as renounce our Church, as being no true Church of Christ; because say they, wee doe want true Ministers, and so have not a right Ministerie among us. But hence wee answer, that wee have the true Church of God, and our Ministers bee the

Matt. 6. 7. verse 16.

a Mist. Rom. d. Pius 5. in Litan. p. 384.

b Rhem. on Heb. 11. tes. 9. and,

c On Matth. 2. sect. 3.

d Aquin. 3. Sum. q. 25. artic. 3, 4.

e Xiritt. 1. Pont. or act. de morte Hen. 3. habita anno 1589

f Bellarmin de cler. l. 1. c. 19.

g Rhem. on Rom. 6. sect. 6.

h Rhem. on 1 Tim. 4 sect. 4. chap. 5. 19 p. 51.

Our Church defended against the Papists.

Matth. 7. verse 16.

the true Ministers of God: for proofe hereof, our Ministers have the outward calling of the Church of England: they say indeed, our calling is nought, because they have no power from God to call, in whose hands it is. But to omit that question for this time, sufficient approbation of our Ministry may be had from the fruits of our Ministers, as they are Ministers; for to leave the fruits of their lives, as insufficient meanes to judge them by, our Ministers teach through Gods blessing, the true and wholsome doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, and are allotted and called hereto by the governours of the Church, and accepted of their people, whose obedience to the faith is the seale of their Ministery: and this is sufficient to confirme the calling of our Ministers; If it had not, Christ would not have said, *Ye shall know them by their fruits:*

The people ought to bee able to judge of teachers.

1. *Vse.* Whereas Christ saith, *Ye shall know them*, speaking to all his hearers, he takes it for granted, that every beleever may bee able to judge of false Prophets: and therefore every one in the Church of God ought to labour for so much knowledge, whereby hee may bee able to know a Teacher by his fruits and doctrine. This then sheweth, that every one ought to know the summe of true Religion, comprised in the Articles of faith, and in the commandements of the Law, both for their true meaning, and right and profitable use unto themselves: which thing I note, because I know many deceive themselves herein, thinking that God will excuse them for their want of knowledge, because they are not book-learned. But let us consider, we have every one this care, to be able to judge of meats which concerne our bodies, which be wholsome, and which not; should wee not then have much more care of our soules, to be able to discerne of doctrines in Religion, which be either the poison, or salvation of our soules?

We may use the ministery of wicked livers.

4. *Vse.* Whereas wholsome doctrine out of Scripture is a note of a true Prophet, it teacheth us that we may lawfully use the Ministerie of those men, whose lives and conversations be evill and offensive, if so be their doctrine bee found and good. The Disciples of our Saviour Christ must not doe according to the waies of the Scribes and Pharisies, but yet they must *heare them when they sit in Moses chaire*: that is, when they teach *Moses* doctrine. And *Paul* is glad when *Christ is truly preached, though it bee not in sinceritie of affection, but of envie.* When the Disciples saw a man that was not called by any speciall calling to follow Christ as themselves were, and cast out Devils in the name of Christ, they thought it intolerable, and therefore forbade him; but Christ said, *Forbid him not, for he that is not against us, is with us.* And the like may be said of them that preach wholsome doctrine, though their lives be still offensive: for in doctrine they bee with Christ, and so faire forth must bee approved.

Mat. 23. 2, 3.

Philip. 1. 18.

Luk. 7. 49.

A Against, consider that the vertue and efficacie of the Word and Sacraments administred by men, is not from the Minister, but from God: a letter is not the worse because it is brought by an unhonest or unfaithfull carrier. Neither doth the evill conscience of the Minister defile the good conscience of the honest hearer, and worthie receiver. This must be remembred, because many take offence at the life of the Minister, so as they will not heare his doctrine, if his conversation be scandalous.

The maine duty of students in Divinity.

V. In that a Prophet is to be knowne by his fruits, and the maine fruit of a true Prophet stands in the good handling of Gods word for the edification and salvation of his hearers; hence the children of the Prophets, and those that are set apart for the Ministry of the Word are taught, that they must make this the maine and principall end of all their studies, to bee able to bring forth the fruits of a true Prophet: that is, to interpret aright the word of God, and thence to gather out wholsome doctrines and uses for the edification of Gods people. And for the enforcing of this dutie let us consider, first, that it is Gods commandement so to doe: 1 Cor. 14. 1. *Seeke for spirituall gifts, but specially to prophesie.* Againe, the greatest skill of a Prophet stands in the true expounding and right dividing of Scripture, so as it may become food for mens soules. 2 Tim. 2. 15. *Shew thy selfe a workeman that needeth not to bee ashamed, in dividing the Word of truth aright.* And lastly, this true fruit of a Minister serves to build up Christs Kingdome, to beat downe the kingdome of sinne, and to feed the soules of men with the food of everlasting life. It well be said, this course is good among the common people; but this is not the learning which is required in the handling of the Word in the schooles of the Prophets. I *answer*, It is the greatest learning that can be in a Minister to be able thus to divide the word of God aright: it goes beyond the gift of tongues and miracles, 1 Cor. 14. 1, 2. I deny not but that it is a part of learning used of the learned, to take a Text of Scripture, and to make a scholasticall discourse upon the same. But yet the worke of a Prophet stands rather in expounding Scripture by Scripture, and in dividing the same aright; giving thereout wholsome doctrine for the edifying of the people of God that heare. In former times when the studie of Scripture was neglected, men betooke themselves to expound the writings of men, and so prophecie was banished, and all sound knowledge in the truth of God: and hence arose diversitie of opinions, and multitudes of foolish questions. And so will it bee with us, if prophecie faile: for to leave the right handling of Scripture, is the way to bring in all errour and barbarisme in religion.

What commends a Minister.

VI. Every Minister of the Gospel is hereby taught, that he ought to bee at liverable to his calling, walking worthy of the same: for a good Minister is knowne by his good fruits, and there-

therefore he must be faithfull in performing all those duties which his calling doth binde him unto. The titles and calling of a Minister bee high and excellent, but yet they will not commend any man for good, unlesse he bring forth the fruits of a Minister in a faithfull discharge of his ministeriall duties.

Lastly, hence we must learne, not to take offence though the Minister failes in his life and conversation, yea, though there be contentions in the ministery about matters of Doctrine: for these are not the fruits of the ministery which is Gods ordinance, but of sinfull men who bewray their imperfections in this holy calling.

Thus much of the Rule. Now followes the proofe and explication thereof, by a comparison drawne from nature in these words, vers. 16. *Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles*: verse 17. *So every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree bringeth forth evill fruit.* verse 18. *A good tree cannot, &c.* The comparison standeth thus; *As a tree is knowne of every one by his fruit, so is a Prophet by his teaching.* More particularly, *As a good tree brings forth good fruit, and cannot bring forth evill fruit: and as an evill tree brings forth evill fruit, and cannot bring forth good fruit*: even so *a true Prophet teacheth wholsome doctrine, and cannot teach false doctrine: and a false prophet teacheth false doctrine, and cannot teach true doctrine.*

Touching this similitude: first, observe in generall from the ground of this comparison, that our Saviour Christ here makes two kinde of trees: a good tree, and an evill tree: by *an evill tree* meaning that which in regard of any fruit is as a rotten tree, as is the briar, the thorne and thistle: for though they live and grow, yet they are void of good fruit, and so are called evill. Now here it may bee well demanded, whence this difference of trees doth come, for all were good by creation, Gen. 1. 31. *God saw all that he had made, and lo it was very good. Answ.* Whether thornes or thistles were created of God I will not now dispute: it is not certaine that they were: but now it is plaine there remaines this difference among plants; *some are good, some are bad*; the goodnesse that is in some comes from Gods blessing, but the badnesse and barrennesse of others comes from the curse of God upon the earth, and upon all creatures for the sinne of our first parents, as we may see, Gen. 3. 17, 18. *The earth is cursed for thy sake: thornes also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee.* And by this we may see the grievousnes of our mother-sinne, it hath made the earth barren and cursed, and many a goodly plant to become fruitlesse and unprofitable: and therefore when wee behold these things in the world, we must take occasion hereof to consider our owne sinne, and blame our selves and not the creatures, for they were cursed for our sakes.

Now more particularly: This comparison is here specially applied unto Prophets: but if we compare this place with S. *Luke*, chap. 6. 44. and 45. wee shall see the holy Ghost there restraineth not this saying to the Prophets alone, but inlargeth the same unto other men, saying, *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evill man out of the evill treasure of his heart bringeth forth evill.* Now by comparing these together, wee may see that this comparison reacheth both unto Prophets and to all other men: from whence we may gather these instructions:

Matth. 7. vers. 16, &c.

The state of the unregenerate.

I. What we are to conceive and thinke of a man that is not regenerate: wee are all by nature branches of the wilde olive, and therefore as a thorne cannot bring forth a grape, nor a thistle figs; no more can a man unregenerate bring forth a good worke. And this wee may more plainely conceive, if wee consider a little the workes of man: they may all be reduced to three heads: some are *evill*, as workes forbidden of God; some are things *indifferent*, being neither forbidden nor commanded; and some are *good workes*, as outward duties of the morall law. Now for *evill works*, they cannot possible be good in any man. For *workes indifferent*, as eating, drinking, buying, selling, &c. they are sinnes, not in themselves, but in him that useth them being out of Christ: and for the *outward duties of the morall Law*, as civill justice, liberalitie, and such like, they are good workes in themselves, because God requireth them, but yet in the unregenerate they are sinnes: *To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbeleeving is nothing pure*, Tit. 1. 15. and *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* Heb. 11. 6. It will be said, that liberality, chastity, &c. be the good gifts of God. *Answ.* That is true, and they be good workes as they are given and commanded of God: but as they are received and used of the naturall man, they are sinnes: for hee failes from the right use of those actions; both for the beginning of them, (for they proceed not in him from a *pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeined*) and also in the end; he doth them not for the glory of God simply, but withall he aimes at his owne praise and reputation, or some such sinister respect.

The greatnesse of original sinne.

II. The use of this Doctrine is this: I. it teacheth us to consider and acknowledge the greatnesse of our originall sinne. Our naturall corruption is most grievous and scarcefull; it makes us to sinne in whatsoever things we doe, though in themselves they bee things indifferent, or else good workes.

Saving grace is not universall.

II. This overthrowes the conceit of popish writers, which teach that God gives to all men an universall common grace, or helpe sufficient, by which they may bee saved if they will: And for them which want the meanes of the Word of God, they say, that if they use that common grace of nature well, God will give them further grace whereby they may come

B Form. degrat. Jib. & subtil. 1. c. 15. Gab. Biel. lib. 2. dist. 27. dub. 4.

to

to salvation. But here wee see, a naturall man having a good gift of God cannot of himselfe use it well; the best things he doth, though they be good in themselves, yet they bee sinnes in him.

The misery of the unregenerate.

III. Hereafter we may see what a miserable case we are in, while we remaine unregenerate: for we can doe nothing but sinne: we bee like to thornes and thistles, which either bring forth no fruit, or else bad fruit: and therefore we must labour to become new plants in Christs Orchard, being ingrafted into him by faith, and made new creatures by regeneration, having beleeving hearts and good consciences, that so we may bring forth good fruits unto the praise and glory of God.

Good workes fall how justification.

IV. Wee may hence learne a generall rule touching a righteous man; namely, that a man must first be truly justified and sanctified before he can doe a good worke: first, a tree must have the sap and nature of a good tree, and then it brings forth good fruits, and not before. And this overturnes a point of naturall and Popish religion, that a man may be justified and saved by his good workes: but that which followes cannot be a cause of that which went before: the fruit cannot make the tree to be good; but onely declare and manifest that it is good; from whence it comes that the fruit is good; and so good workes they proceed from justification. They say justification is twofold: one, whereby a man of an evill man is made a good man; the second, whereby of a good man one is made better: the first they say is of workes, but the second justification is of grace. *Ans.* But this is false: for the fruit makes not the tree a better tree, but if the tree increase in goodnesse, it proceeds from some other cause, not from the fruit thereof.

Concil. Trid. Sess. 6. cap. 7. & can. 32.

Bellarm. de justif. lib. 4. cap. 14.

v. 19 *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewne downe and cast into the fire.*

20 *Therefore by their fruits shall ye know them.*

The conclusion of the false prophets.

These words containe a *conclusion* gathered from the former similitude, which is here also continued; wherein is set downe a grievous threatning of eternall damnation, the deserved punishment of all false prophets. As if Christ had said, looke as in an orchard every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewne downe, and cast into the fire to bee burnt: so in the Church of God the false prophet shall not always be reputed for a true Prophet, but at the length shall bee discovered, cut off from the Church, and condemned. A verable ground is that saying of our Saviour Christ, *Every branch which beareth not fruit in mee is taken away,*

Joh. 15. 2, 6.

cast forth, and withereth, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they burne. And S. *Peter* saith, *Their damnation sleepeth not*, 2 Pet. 2. 3.

Comfort against false prophets.

The Vse. I. This serves to comfort Gods children in regard of false prophets; for though Gods Church bee troubled with them for a time, yet it shall not alwaies be so: the time will come wherein they must bee cast out, and receive their due and deserved destruction. And this especially must be remembred, to stay and comfort our hearts in regard of the popish religion, which doth most of all molest and trouble us: first, because it is naturall, and so readily embraced: secondly, many among us doe much affect it: and thirdly, it is maintained by mighty Monarchs. But yet for all that it must downe, for *it is a plant which God never set not plant*, &c. Matth. 15. 13. and the chiefe upholders of it shall be destroyed.

II. Vse. This teacheth us to eschew and shun false teachers: and therefore doth Christ adde this exhortation, Matth. 15. 14. *Let them alone, they are the blinde leaders of the blinde*: and Revel. 18. 4. *Come out of her* (that is, spirituall Babylon which is Rome) *my people, for if you partake with her in her sinnes, ye shall suffer of her punishments.*

III. Vse. The words of this threatning being further applied unto all men, (as they are in S. *Luke*) doe teach us, that it is not sufficient for us to abstaine from committing grosse sins, and to doe no man harme, but beside eschewing evill we must doe good. In the last judgement, the sentence of condemnation shall bee pronounced against the wicked, not for robbing the poore, but *for not relieving of them*, and *for not visiting and clothing them.* Which doth notably confute the vaine opinion of many ignorant people, who thinke, that if they live an innocent and harmelesse life, God will hold them excused, and save them; but the tree that brings not forth good fruit must be burnt.

Matth. 25. 42, 43.

Vers. 20. *Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them.* Here Christ repeats againe the Rule he delivered in the 16. verse, which shewes, that it is a speciall rule to be observed of us all: for there is no idle word in Scripture, neither any thing repeated in vaine. The meaning thereof we have heard, and the meanes whereby a false prophet may be discovered, with the uses thereof: among which wee shewed that every true beleever in Gods Church may be able to discover a false prophet, whereto these three caveats must be added: I. the party that would discover a false prophet, must humble himselfe before God, and have an heart in some sort emptied of all pride and selfe-love: for *The Lord will teach the humble his waies*, Psal. 25. 9. yea, *he doth exalt the humble and meeke*, Luke 1. 52. and in all things the humbled heart is preserved with the Lord. II. The party humbled must yeeld himselfe to obey the will of God. *If any man do my fathers will, he shall know*

Duties of him that would discover a false prophet.

of

of my doctrine whether it be of God, Joh. 7. 17. and *David* profeſſeth of himſelfe, that *hee was wiſer than his teachers, and underſtood more than the ancient, becauſe he kept Gods commandements*, Pſal. 119.99,100. III. Hee muſt pray unto the Lord, and aske wiſdome in faith and in humility, and the Lord will give it unto him, Jam. 1. 5. *If any man lacke wiſdome, let him aske of God who giveth liberally.* Yet ſome will ſay, it is an hard matter to diſcerne a falſe prophet: Anſwer, we have ordinarily this capacity, when wee reade or heare read the laſt will and teſtament of our Anceſtors, wee are able to conceive and judge of the meaning thereof: well, our Lord Jeſus hath left with us his will and teſtament in the holy Scriptures; which concerning morall duties, and matters of faith neceſſary to ſalvation, is ſo plaine, that it may be underſtood of the ſimpleſt, elſe Chriſt would never have ſent the Jewes to the Scriptures for the certaine knowledge of the Meſſias. Which notably diſcovers the fraudulent dealing of the Romiſh teachers, who in matters of controverſie in Religion, ſend us for reſolution to the Church, calling it the ſtay and pillar whereto wee muſt leane in all doubts of doctrines. The Church I grant is to be reverenced, but yet we muſt not build our faith upon the doctrine of men. Our Saviour Chriſt ſent the Jewes unto the Scriptures: and hereby the Bereans tried *Pauls* doctrine, and are commended. And indeed, though men be never ſo unlearned, yet if they come in humility to ſearch the Scripture, and in obedience unto God, praying for knowledge, they may be able by Gods Word to diſcerne of falſe teachers.

v. 21 *Not every one that ſaith vnto mee, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdome of Heaven, but he that doth my fathers will which is in heaven.*

From this verſe to the 24. is contained an other portion of Chriſts Sermon, being the ſeventh part of this Chapter; wherein he intreateth of the ſtate of thoſe that profeſſe his holy name in his Church here on earth. And his maine ſcope and drift herein, is to ſhew that men muſt not content themſelves to profeſſe religion outwardly, but therewith they muſt joyne true godlines and ſincere obedience. This point is as weightie and of as great importance as any of the former, reſpecting the maine point of mans ſalvation: and it containeth two parts; a maine concluſion in this verſe: and a proofe and explanation of one part thereof, ver. 22, 23. The concluſion it ſelfe hath two parts: 1. that *ſome men profeſſing the name of Chriſt ſhall not be ſaved*, which part is afterward explaned and confirmed: the 2. part is this, that *ſome profeſſors of religion ſhall be ſaved*, which is not only propounded, but the parties alſo are plainly deſcribed.

The firſt part is a moſt fearefull ſentence againſt many that live in the Church, that notwithſtanding their profeſſion of the name of Chriſt, yet they ſhall never be ſaved. And this is moſt true, being ſpoken by him that hath the power of life and of death, who is alſo the God of truth that cannot lie, ſaying, *Not every one that ſaith, Lord, Lord*, that is, that profeſſeth God to be his God, *ſhall enter into the kingdome of heaven.* There be two kind of profeſſors in the Church of God that ſhall never be ſaved: the firſt are *groſſe hypocrites*, which profeſſe Chriſt with their mouth, and yet in heart and life they renounce him: of this ſort is, firſt the *common Atheiſt*, who only for feare of the Magiſtrates Lawes profeſſeth Religion: ſecondly, the *Epicure*, that is, ſuch an one who beares Chriſts name for faſhions ſake, and yet his belly and pleaſure is his god: thirdly, the *worldling*, who ſpends the ſtrength of bodie and minde, and all he hath, on the world for earthly things: Now none of all theſe, if they thus live and die, can be ſaved. The ſecond ſort are more *cloſe hypocrites*, which profeſſe the name of Chriſt in ſome truth, and have in them ſome good gifts of God, by reaſon whereof both before men and in their owne conceit, they are reputed members of the Church; and yet for all this they are indeed but hypocrites, which ſhall never be ſaved.

And that wee may ſome what diſcerne of them, I will note the gifts which they may have, whereby they may come to profeſſe Chriſt truly: they may be reduced to five heads: The firſt, is *the ſpirit of bondage to feare*, Rom. 8.15. This is a certaine gift of God whereby a man doth diſcerne the right meaning, and judiciall uſe of the Law in himſelfe, concerning ſinne and the puniſhment thereof; (for though a man by nature know ſomething of the law, yet he knowes not all, nor the right uſe thereof;) now by reaſon of this knowledge, he ſees himſelfe in bondage, and in regard thereof doth feare; from whence may proceed many good things, as griefe for ſinne, confeſſion and humiliation for the ſame, and prayer for pardon. Thus wicked *Pharaoh* confeſſed the *righteouſnes of God*, and *that he and his people had ſinned*, Exod. 9. 27. And ſo did *Ahab* at the heavie meſſage of God by *Eliah*, 1 King 21. 27. *He rent his clothes, and put ſackcloth upon him, and faſted, and lay in ſackcloth.* So *Iudas* when he ſaw that Chriſt was condemned, he *repented* of his fact, being grieved for it, and aſhamed to looke any man in the face; and alſo *confeſſed* the ſame before God and men, Matth. 27. 3,4. A ſecond gift which a cloſe hypocrite may have, is *faith*; as had *Simon Magus*: *for he beleeved, and was baptized*, Act. 8. 13. neither was it a falſe and diſſembling faith altogether, but in ſome ſort a true, though not a living faith: for he beleeved, and yet was in the gall of bitterneſſe. So Joh. 2. 23.

2. 23. it is ſaid, *Certaine beleeved in Chriſt, but he durſt not commit himſelfe unto them.* And that we be not deceived herein, we muſt know that this faith of an hypocrite hath in it three things; *knowledge* of the truth, *approbation* thereof with aſſent unto it, and a *kinde of perſuaſion* that Chriſt is his redeemer. Of the ſecond degree of this faith wee have example, 2 Pet. 2.18. where ſome are ſaid *to be beguiled with wantonneſſe through fleſhly luſts, who had cleeave escaped from them that be wrapt in error*: that is, in idolatry. And of the third degree we have example in the ſame chap. verſ. 1. where ſome falſe prophets are ſaid *to deny Chriſt that bought them*; becauſe for a time they profeſſed themſelves to bee redeemed, and were alſo perſwaded in a generall ſort that hee had bought them: yet herein they failed, that they did not truly apprehend the merit of Chriſt, and apply it effectually unto themſelves. The third gift of a cloſe hypocrite is a *taſte of Gods favour*: Heb. 6.5. it is ſaid of ſome that fall quite away, *That they were enlightned by Gods Spirit, and had a taſte of the good Word of God, and of the powers of the world to come*, though they were never fed nor filled therewith. The fourth gift is *good affections*; good (I ſay) not in them, but in their kinde, and ſo far forth as we can judge: they have *joy* in the good things of God: Luk. 8. 13. *They that are on the ſtones are they which when they have heard, receive the Word with joy. They have zeale for Gods glory*, as had *Iehu*, 2 King. 10. 16. and yet hee departed not from the ſins of his forefathers, v. 31. Thirdly, they have *reverence to Gods Miniſters*, as *Herod* to *Iohn Baptiſt*, Mark. 6.20. *Herod knowing Iohn to be a juſt and holy man, feared and reverenced him.* The fifth gift is an outward reformation of life: *the ſtony ground* receives the ſeed with joy, and brings forth ſome fruit, but it laſteth not: of ſuch it is ſaid, Heb. 10. 29. *They treed under foot the Sonne of God, and count the blood of the Teſtament an unholy thing wherewith they were ſanctified*: that is, according to their profeſſion and perſuaſion. And thus wee ſee what kinde of gifts an hypocrite may have, and yet never be ſaved.

Vſes. 1. The conſideration whereof muſt move us to looke unto our ſelves, that we have better things in us than theſe are: for here wee ſee wee may goe on to perdition, carrying the profeſſion of Chriſt in our mouthes. And the rather is this to bee conſidered of us, becauſe many looke to be ſaved who come ſhort of *Simon Magus* in knowledge, and of *Saul, Ahab*, and *Iudas* in humility; yea, and for faith, farre ſhort of the Devill himſelfe, who is ſaid *to believe and tremble*: but how canſt thou looke to bee ſaved, that in regard of grace, commeſt ſhort of thoſe which are now condemned?

Secondly, hence wee muſt learne to ſuſpect our ſelves, and call our ſelves to a reckoning about our faith and obedience, and we muſt not flatter our ſelves herein: for theſe things before-named will not ſave us: many have had faith in ſome truth for ſame degrees thereof, and alſo good affections and other gifts; as wee have ſeene, who are yet for all this condemned.

Thirdly, ſeeing there be two ſorts of men in the Church that ſhall be condemned, the one whereof have many worthy gifts; this muſt move us not to reſt in thoſe things, but to labour and ſtrive to have our hearts rooted and grounded in the love of God in Chriſt, and to become new creatures in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe; and then ſhall we be as the wiſe virgins having the oyle of grace in the veſſels of our hearts, which will never be quenched till we come into the marriage-chamber with our Bridegroome Chriſt Jeſus.

The ſecond part of the concluſion laid downe by our Saviour Chriſt is this, That ſome men profeſſing the name of Chriſt in the Church of God ſhall be ſaved. And theſe perſons are here deſcribed unto us by their effect or action, to wit, *The doing of the will of the father.* And becauſe this is an infallible note of them that ſhall be ſaved, I will briefly ſhew what it is *to doe the Fathers will.* The Scriptures beſt expound themſelves, Joh. 6.40. *This is the will of him that ſent me, that every one that hath ſeene the Son, and believeth in him, ſhould have everlaſting life.* 1 Theſſ. 4. 3, 4, &c. *This is the will of God, even your ſanctification: and that you ſhould abſtaine from fornication; and that every one ſhould know how to poſſeſſe his veſſell in holineſſe and honour, that no man oppreſſe or defraud his brother, &c.* Theſe two places of Scripture laid together, ſhew that the doing of the Fathers will ſtands in three things, in *faith*, in *repentance*, and *new obedience*: faith is directly expreſſed in the place of *Iohn*, and repentance, which is a fruit of faith, as alſo new obedience, the fruit of them both, in the words of the Apoſtle *Paul*: for by *Sanctification* is meant repentance, and new obedience by the duties following:

For the firſt; in true ſaving faith there are three things required: *Knowledge, aſſent*, and *application*. By *Knowledge* I meane the right conceiving of the neceſſarie Doctrines of true religion, eſpecially of thoſe which concerne Chriſt our Redeemer. *Aſſent* is, when a man knowing this doctrine, doth further approve of the ſame as wholſome doctrine, and the truth of God, directing us aright unto ſalvation. *Application* is, when we conceive in our hearts a true perſwaſion of Gods mercy towards us particularly, in the free pardon of all our ſins, and for the ſalvation of our ſoules: example of this particular applying wee have in the Apoſtle *Paul*, Gal. 2.20. who profeſſeth thus, *Now live not I, but Chriſt liveth in me, and the life that I now live is by faith in the Son of God*: which what that is, he ſheweth after, ſaying, *Who hath loved me, and given himſelfe for me*: and without this particular application, neither knowledge nor aſſent can ſave us. In the ſixth of *Iohn* Chriſt propounds himſelfe unto us as the *bread* of

of life, and water of life: now wee know that food, unlesse it be received, will not nourish the body: even so unlesse wee doe by the hand of faith particularly receive and apply Christ unto our selves, all our knowledge and assent will be as food uneaten and undigested. It may bee said that hypocrites have knowledge, assent, and a persuasion of Gods favour, and therefore this is not a sure note of doing the Fathers will. I answer, an hypocrite (as *Simon Magus*) may have true knowledge of Gods Word, and give assent thereunto, and in regard of both these have true faith in some degree; yea, he may conceive a persuasion of Gods mercy in the pardon of his sinnes, though falsly in presumption upon false grounds and insufficient. Now that a man may discerne the truth of his faith and persuasion of Gods mercy, from that which is in hypocrisie, hee is to observe therein three things: the *beginning* of his faith, the *fruits* and the *constancie* thereof. The *beginning* of true faith, is hearing the Word of God preached, especially the Gospel: the Law going before as an occasion or preparing-means, wherby a man comes to see his sinnes and his miserie thereby, and thereupon to desire reconciliation with God in the pardon of them; and hearing the promises of mercy, to desire faith whereby he may embrace the same, labouring against unbeleefe. This, though it be not a lively faith, yet it is the beginning of true faith, and no hypocrite hath the same soundly wrought in him. The *fruit* of true faith is a change of the whole man both in heart and life; making the heart contrary to it selfe, in moderating the naturall affections and passions thereof, and keeping them in compasse of true obedience, and causing a man in every estate to rest contented with the will of God, as *Isay* saith, *He that beleeveth shall not make haste*. Thirdly, *constancy* in true faith is knowne by this, when a man relies wholly on God, even then when hee feeles no taste of his mercy, but hath all tokens of his displeasure. Every man will beleeve when he hath present signes and pledges of Gods loving favour, but true faith being *the evidence of things hoped for*, will make a man beleeve above hope as *Abraham* did: and being *the subsisting of things not seene*, will cause a man to beleeve when he sees no tokens of Gods mercy: and indeed, hee that lets goe the hold of Gods mercy when he is in distresse, may assure himselfe he never had true faith: for the just shall live by faith in all estates, and will with *Iob*, trust in God though he kill them.

The second worke wherein consisteth the doing of the Fathers will, is to *repent of our sinnes*: and this is a fruit of faith. In true repentance there be two things; the beginning, and the nature of it: The beginning of it is a godly sorrow, when a man is grieved properly and duetily, because by his sinne he hath offended God, who hath bin unto him so long a Father in Christ. This consists in repentance unto salvation not to be repented of, 2 Cor. 7. 10. and it ariseth not so much from the feare of punishment, as from the consideration of Gods mercy, making a man displeased with himselfe for offending so loving a God, who hath beene so gracious and bountifull unto him in Christ. The nature of repentance stands in the change of the minde: when any person laies aside the purpose of sinning, and by Gods blessing and grace taketh to himselfe a new purpose never to sinne more. This is properly to repent, and if this be in truth, hence will follow the change of the will, of the affections, and of all the actions of the life.

The nature of repentance.

It may be said, that an hypocrite may repent as *Iudas* did, Matth. 27. 3. and therefore this is not a good note of doing Gods will. *Answ. Iudas* did repent: hee was indeed grieved for his fact, wishing with all his heart that it had never beene done: but this was nothing, his sorrow was onely *worldly, causing death*, as the Apostle calls it, 2 Corinth. 7. 10. arising from the horrour and feare of punishment, not from consideration of Gods mercie: it was without true hatred of sinne committed, without hope of mercy, or purpose to glorifie God by new obedience, and so was no true repentance.

The third worke wherein consisteth the doing of Gods will, is *new obedience*: and it is the fruit of both the former, whereby a man being indued with faith and repentance, doth according to the measure of grace received, endevour himselfe to yeeld obedience to all Gods commandements, from all the powers and parts both of his soule and his bodie: and this I call *new*, because it is a renuing of that in man, whereto he was perfectly enabled by creation. But here it will bee said, that many who shall never be saved, have attained to reformation of life; and therefore this is not a true and sufficient note of him that shall be saved. *Answ.* True it is, many hypocrites have reformation of life, but yet they faile two waies; First, their reformation is onely outward not inward, their thoughts, wills, and affections, still remaine wicked and corrupt. Secondly, their obedience is partiall, onely to some of Gods Commaments, not to all: so *Herod*, hee would heare *Iohn* gladly, and doe many things, but yet hee would not leave his brothers wife. But true obedience, which proceedeth from true faith, hath these heads and branches; First, the partie must *prove what is the good will of God*, Rom. 12. 2. Secondly, he must restraine his life from outward offence, which tend to the dishonour of God, and scandall of the Church, 1 Thes. 5. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 11, 12. Thirdly, he must mortifie the inward corruptions of his owne heart. Fourthly, he must labour to conceive new motions agreeable to the will of God, and thence bring forth and practise good duties; so performing both outward and inward obedience unto God: and by these may a man discerne

New obedience.

Branches of new obedience.

the truth of his obedience: and thus wee see what professors they be which shall be saved.

Vses. 1. Now considering that salvation is promised to them that bee doers of Gods will, we must hereby bee exhorted to become more cheerefull in doing Gods will by faith, repentance, and new obedience: and to further us in this duty we must use these helpes: I. We must labour for a true persuasion of Gods mercy in the pardon of our sinnes, and for the salvation of our soules: this being truly conceived, will urge a man to true obedience, whereby he may shew himselfe thankefull to God for so great a mercie. II. Wee must consider that wee are the Temples of the holy Ghost, which is a wonderfull dignity to a sinnefull man: and in regard hereof, wee must stirre up our selves so to live, that we make not sad the Spirit of God which dwelleth in us. III. Wee must consider the blessings of God bestowed upon us both in soule and body one by one: and this will move us to love God, which love we shall shew in keeping his commandements: for *this is the love of God, that we keepe his commandements*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. IV. Let us consider the threatnings of God against sinne, and his judgements upon them that live in sinne, for every place is full of Gods judgements; and these will helpe to restraine our corruptions that they breake not forth into action. V. We must meditate on the word of God, and use fervent prayer unto God for his grace: for by this meanes *David* did notably stirre up himselfe to faith, repentance, and new obedience, as wee may see at large in the 119. Psalme.

How to become cheerfull doers of the will of God.

II. Vse. In that many having faith, and repentance, and outward reformation of life in some degrees, shall never be saved, wee must labour to goe beyond all hypocrites in these graces: in faith we must not content our selves with a generall persuasion of Gods mercy, but wee must labour to conceive the same to be true and sound touching the remission of our sinnes, and the salvation of our soules: we must looke that it have a sound beginning, good fruits, and stedfast continuance; and for repentance, wee must labour to see that our sorrow arise from the consideration of the goodnesse of God whom wee have offended; and that it breed in us a change of our mindes in the purpose of not sinning: whereto must bee comformable the will and affections, and the whole man. And for new obedience, we must be as carefull in mind, will, and affections, as in the outward actions of our life to doe the will of God; and that in all Gods commandements.

We must goe beyond hypocrites in graces.

III. Vse. Many there bee that thinke their case good, because they live a civill honest life, without wronging others openly or wittingly, which thing indeed is commendable; but yet farre short of that which is required for salvation; therefore they must not trust to these broken staves of outward and common honesty, though they bee good things in their kinde: for many there be that shall never come in heaven, which have had farre more in them than these things are: and therefore whatsoever these persons be they must not rest, till they finde some portion of true grace in their hearts, by vertue whereof they may plainly see themselves gone beyond all hypocrites in the things that concerne salvation.

V. 22 *Many will say unto mee in that day, Lord, Lord, have wee not by thy Name prophesied? and by thy Name cast out devils? and by thy name done many great works?*

23 *And then will I professe to them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that worke iniquity.*

In these two verses Christ returnes to explane and confirme the first conclusion of the former verse, concerning those professors that shall not be saved. The words containe two parts: First, a description of the persons by their behaviour, v. 22. Secondly, a declaration of their condemnation, v. 23. For the first; these professors are described by three arguments: I. by their number, *many*: II. by the time which they shall plead thus for themselves, and stand on their profession of service done to Christ; *in that day*: that is, in that great and terrible day of the last judgement: III. by their gifts and qualities where with they were indued, *have we not in thy name prophesied? and by thy name cast out devils, &c?*

For the first: the number of professors which shall not be saved is great: *For many* (saith Christ) *shall say unto me*. Indeed wee are not able to say how many they bee which shall not be saved, for that is a thing proper to God: and yet the Scripture teacheth us that the number of those which shall be condemned, is greater than the number of those which shall be saved: for besides that the greatest part of the world in former times did never heare of Christ, here it is plaine that among the professors of the name of Christ, many shall be condemned: and v. 13. *Many walke in the broad way to destruction, few in the narrow*.

Of the number that shall be condemned.

Whereby wee are taught, first, that we must not frame our lives according to the example of the multitude, to live and doe as the most doe, because the most shall be condemned: but we must strive to enter in at the strait gate, and to be of that little flocke unto whom the kingdome of heaven is promised.

Secondly, hence wee learne, not to content

Matth. 7. vers. 22.

our selves to live as most men and women doe that professe the name of Christ, but wee must labour to goe beyond the multitude in regard of the truth of our faith and repentance. It was not sufficient for the wise virgins to beare the name of virgins, to have lamps burning, and to goe forth to meet the bridegroome: for all these things did the foolish virgins also; but one thing more they had, which was the oyle of grace, whereby they were enlightened to goe with the Bridegroome into his chamber; which the foolish virgins lacking, were shut out of the doores and not admitted to come in, Matth. 25.

The second argument whereby these reprobate professors are described, is the circumstance of time when they shall thus plead for themselves, why they should not be condemned, to wit, at the last day when they shal come to bee arraigned at the tribunall seat of Gods judgement. This is a point of great weight and moment, worthy all observation; that men not onely in this life and in death, but even at the last day should thus plead for themselves.

Hence wee learne, that many professing service to Christ, shall conceive in their mindes a persuasion that they are the true servants and children of God: they shall live and die in this persuasion; and yet for all this at the last judgement, they shall receive the sentence of condemnation. A thing deeply to be weighed of every one: And the consideration of it ought to teach us all to take heed of spirituall pride and selfe-love, whereby men flatter and deceive themselves in their estate, over-weening the good things they have, and fassly thinking that they have that blessing of God which indeed they havenot. This must move us not onely to labour to be purged of this pride, but also teach us to suspect the worst of our selves, and to judge our selves severely in regard of unbeleefe and hollownesse of heart: for this will bee a meanes to make us escape the judgement of condemnation at the last day, which Christ shall pronounce against many of those that thinke themselves to be his servants.

Further, observe where Christ saith, *in that day*, he singleth out the day of judgement as a most terrible day. And saying, *they shall say unto mee*, hee makes himselfe the Judge of all the world in that day; and further pointing out their particular pleading for themselves, he gives us to understand that he is very God, who knoweth long before, not onely the specches and actions, but the very secret thoughts and imaginations of all men that have beene, that are, or shall be, from the beginning to the end of the world.

These things laid together and well considered, must stir up in our hearts a speciall duty, which the Apostle had learned, 2 Cor. 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord*: that is, not onely in judgement to conceive, but also in heart

A and affection to bee persuaded of the terrible fearefulnesse of the last judgement; and in this regard not to content our selves with the gift of knowledge, and with an outward profession, but to labour for soundnesse and sincerity of faith, of repentance, and new obedience, both in heart and life. This was *Pauls* practice, in regard of the resurrection to this judgement, *He endeavoured himselfe to have always a cleare conscience toward God, and toward man*, Act. 24. 16. And this duty is most necessary: for such is our ignorance and unbeleefe, that wee little regard the terrour of this day, but either thinke it shall not come, or though it doe, we shall scape well enough.

The third argument here used, is drawne from the gifts and qualities of the persons which make this plea for themselves: they are B such as have prophesied *in the name of Christ, cast out devils, and done many great works in his name.* To *prophesie* here signifieth to teach the people of God, by expounding the Scripture, and applying the same to the consciences for their edification: and this office is called prophecie, to grace and commend the office of a Minister, because it was the principall duty of the Prophets themselves, thus to handle the word of God for the instruction and edification of Gods people, howsoever at some time they did foretell unto Gods people things to come. And therfore he which hath this office, and discharge the same with good conscience, doth C a worke no lesse honourable, than did the ancient holy Prophets.

By thy name] The *name* of Christ here signifieth two things: 1. appointment and commandement from Christ: men that preach the word of God, being rightly called thereunto, teach and preach in the name of Christ: for those whom the Church calleth lawfully, Christ himselfe calleth, and they preach by vertue of his name. Secondly, it signifieth to preach in the roome and stead of Christ, to preach that which Christ would preach, and in that manner also which Christ would use: 2 Cor. 5. 20. *We are embassadours for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, &c.* And here wee may see a difference among the kindes of teaching which D God requireth of men. Masters teach their servants; parents teach their children; and one neighbour and friend another: but all these differ from the teaching of the Minister: for he teacheth being called by Christ, and in stead of Christ: but the master teacheth not by like vertue, but onely by the right of mastership: the father by vertue of fatherhood, and one friend another by vertue of brotherly charity. And this sheweth the dignity of the calling of a Minister, and the weight of his office: no master, no father, or ordinary professor hath the like.

Cast out devils, and done my great workes] For the better understanding hereof, wee must intreat something of the working of miracles:

What is to prophesie.

What it is to professe in Christs name.

Matth. 7. vers. 22.

What a miracle is.

God alone can worke miracles.

How men doe the miracles.

Miracles now ceased.

Excellent gifts without love are without faith.

cles: and first, we are to see what a miracle is. A miracle is not onely a strange worke done, but such a worke as is above the strength of all creatures, and beyond the whole power of creatures nature; for it is done by the power of God himselfe immediately, which is above the strength of all creatures: such a worke was the *slaying of the Sanne*, Iosh. 10. 12. and the *going backward of the shadow of the dial*, 2 King. 20. 11. Secondly, the Lord God alone is the author of a miracle, who created heaven and earth; as *David* B saith, *Thou art great, and doest wonderous things, thou art God alone*, Psalm. 86. 10. No Angel, nor other creature in heaven or earth, no not the manhood of Christ, though exalted above all creatures, is able to worke a miracle. How then will some say, doe these men plead their working of miracles? *Answ.* No as authors, but as instruments and ministers whom the Lord used in the working of them; for men worke miracles by beleeving, on this manner: First, they receive a speciall instinct and inward motion, that God will use them as instruments in the working of a miracle, if they pray unto him, and command the worke to be done; upon this instinct, they beleeve that if they pray to God and command in his name, it shall be done: and lastly, they pray, and command according to this instinct, and so the thing they beleeved is done. And thus is this speech to be understood, *Have wee not cast out devils, &c?* that is, thou hast put an extraordinary instinct into our minds, that if we prayed unto thee, and commanded the devils in thy name to depart, it should be done: this we have beleeved, and accordingly practised, and so have cast out devils, and done many great wonders by thy name. This gift of miracles doth not now befall the Church of God; all that the Church now hath (for aught I see) is the gift of prayer, joyned with fasting, which also must be conditionall, depending on Gods glory, the good of Gods Church, and of the party troubled: they may not pray absolutely for this worke of casting out devils, or for the doing of such like miracles, much lesse may they now give peremptory command for the being of them. If it be said, that Gods Church hath all needfull gifts, as well now as in former times: I answer, it hath all gifts needfull to their salvation, and therefore prayer in the Church serves now either to deliver the party troubled, or else to procure as good a blessing as deliverance is, which is patience and repentance. And thus wee see what manner of persons they bee that shall say Lord, Lord, and make apologie for themselves at the last day, and yet bee damned; namely, some that have beene excellent preachers of the Word, and some that have had extraordinary power to cast out devils: and lastly, others that have wrought many strange cures and miracles by faith in Christs name.

Now hence we learne, first, that most excellent gifts will not availe to the salvation of any

A man or woman, unlesse they have true faith, sincere repentance, and new obedience, whereby they doe the will of God: for what an excellent gift is it to be able to teach and preach the word of God? what a rare thing is it to have heard Christ himselfe preach, and to have given him entertainment? and yet neither of these can save a man: Christ saith here, the apologie of preaching shall doe men no good, and the privilege of eating and drinking with Christ, and of hearing him teach in their streets, will nothing availe; Christ will say, I never knew you, Luk. 13. 26, 27. It is likewise an excellent earthly privilege to be allied unto Christ: and yet Christ preferreth spirituall kindred by faith and obedience farre before it, saying to one that told him his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speake with him, *Who* (saith he) *is my mother? and who are my brethren? and pointing to his Disciples, hee said, Behold my mother and my brethren: for whosoever shall doe my Fathers will, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.* And with reverence it may be truly said of the Virgin *Mary*, that how soever it was a wonderfull privilege unto her to be the mother of Christ Iesus, yet if shee had not as well borne him in her heart by faith, as shee did in her body, she had never beene saved; and therefore *Paul* saith, *Though we had knowne Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more: but if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 16. and *in Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 6.

Luke 11. 27, 28. 12. 50.

August. lib. de virgin.

The consideration whereof, must move us all to labour to become new creatures, and to get the graces of Gods children who are regenerate, even true faith, true repentance, and new obedience, and not to rest in other gifts though they be most excellent.

Again, Students that have a great measure of knowledge and other excellent parts, as memory, languages, &c. must learne, not to be puffed up therewith, (*for knowledge puffeth up*, 1 Cor. 8. 1.) but withall to get the saving graces before named: for without a repentant and beleeving heart, all the gifts they have will never save them: nay, rather they must bee abased D thereby, for without true saving faith, all other gifts be but as so many millstones, to presse them deeper into the pit of destruction.

Secondly, here note, that many learned preachers, who have soundly handled the word of God for the conversion of others, shall yet themselves be condemned, like to the Carpenters that built *Noahs* Arke, and yet were drowned in the flood. The consideration whereof, must teach all Ministers, according to the counsell of the Apostle, Act. 20. 28. *To take heed*, first, unto *themselves*, and then *to their flockes*: so *Paul* bids *Timothy*, *Take heed unto thy selfe and unto learning, continue therein: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thy selfe, and them*

that heare thee, 1 Tim.4.16. Secondly, to bee followers of *Paul* in the practice of mortification, *who did beat downe his body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any meanes after hee had preached to others, he himselfe should be a reprobate*, 2 Cor.9.27. Thirdly, the people of God are here also taught their duty: for seeing this fearefull judgement shall befall some Ministers of the Word, that notwithstanding their preaching, they shall be condemned; therefore Gods people must not rest upon the example of their Ministers lives, but cleave fast unto that wholesome doctrine, which they gather soundly and directly out of the word of God: his life and practice is no sure rule to follow, further than it agreeth with the word of God: and therefore *Paul* saith, *Be followers of me, as I follow Christ*, 1 Cor.11.1. But the Word is a true rule and square, and as many as walke according to this rule, *peace shall be upon them and mercy*, Galat. 6.16.

Fourthly, seeing some workers of miracles must also be condemned, this teacheth us not to trust them which bring unto us doctrines, because they are confirmed by wonders; for such as worke wonders may deceive themselves in the matter of their owne salvation, and therefore much more may they deceive us in this or that particular point of doctrine. Whereas therefore sundry points of Popery, as Purgatorie, Pilgrimages, invocation of Saints, and such like, are avouched to bee confirmed by miracles, (which no doubt were but forgeries, and lying wonders) yet let it be granted that they were true miracles, that proveth not that wee should beleeve them, because the word of God doth not confirme the same unto us; for beside that which is revealed and recorded in Scripture, we must receive no doctrine in religion, be it never so miraculously confirmed.

verse. 23. *And then will I professe to them I never knew you: depart from me yee workers of iniquity.* Here Christ sets downe the just condemnation of those men which make an apologie for themselves at the day of judgement, and wonder at their condemnation: and withall he answereth them in that wherein they shall plead for themselves. The words containe three parts: I. a profession made by Christ to these men, *that he never knew them.* II. a commandement of Christ unto them, *Depart from me*: and I II. a reason of the commandement, *Ye workers of iniquity.* For the profession of Christ; *Then*, that is, in the day of Judgement, at that time when men shall wonder at their condemnation; making apologies of their service to God; even *then*, saith Christ, *will I professe, &c.* In this phrase Christ alludeth to the fact of these hypocrites, for they professed the name of Christ, and did plead service done unto him; as if hee should say, Many in that day which have professed my name in the world, shall plead their service done to me: but I will make another profession unto them, that is, I will make it cleere and manifest unto all the world, that I never knew them, and that their profession of me was in vaine.

The words of Christs profession are of great weight and moment, containing some difficultie in regard of the sense, which must bee searched out. The knowledge of God whereby he knowes his creatures is two fold; Generall and Speciall. Gods generall knowledge is that whereby hee understands and sees all things, both past, present, and to come: and in regard of this it is said, *All things are naked and open before his eyes with whom we have to do*, Heb. 4.13. And by vertue of this, Christ here foretelleth what shall be the apologie of some wicked men at the last day. And in regard of this generall knowledge, all men are knowne unto God, and the most secret actions of wicked wretches: Jer.32.19. *His eyes are open unto all the wayes of the sonnes of men, to give unto them according to their wayes, and according to the fruit of their workes.* The speciall knowledge of God, is that whereby hee acknowledgeth, approveth, and accepteth of his creature to be his, vouchsafing unto it his speciall favour: now this is largeth not it selfe to all and every man: for some there be, on whom he will shew his favour, and of them it is said, *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*, Psam.1.6. others there be on whom he will not shew forth his mercie, and of them it is said, *The way of the wicked shall perish.* Which opposition sheweth what is meant by Gods knowledge of the godly. So likewise, Rom.11.2. *Will the Lord destroy his people whom hee knew before?* that is, whom hee approved and loved: and of this speciall knowledge hee speaketh in this place. *Never*] This word excludeth all time, as if he should say, I does not now, neither ever did approve and accept you for mine owne; yea, even in that time when you professed me, preached, and wrought wonders in my name even then I say, I did not accept and approve of you.

From this some of confession wee are to learne sundry points of doctrine: First, hereby is plainly confuted and overthrowne the opinion of some Protestants, who hold that Christ shed his bloud for all and every man without exception, and that in regard of Gods purpose and will he died for all men; for *Cain* as well as for *Abel*, for *Iudas* as well as for *Peter*, and for them which shall bee condemned, as well as for them which shall be saved. But marke what Christ saith here to them that shall be condemned, I never knew you, nor approved of you for mine. But if Christ died effectually for all and every man in the world without exception, then he bought all and every man without exception, with the price of his bloud; and if that, then every one without exception is Christs; and those which are truly his, Christ will undoubtedly acknowledge for his owne. But here we see Christ will not acknowledge all and

Matth.7. vers.23.

God's knowledge of his creatures.

1. Generall.

2. Speciall.

Universall redemption confuted.

and every man to be his, and therefore undoubtedly hee did not purchase by the price of his bloud, all and every man to be his without exception. I deny not, but that Christ died for all men in the sense of Scripture; but the word of God never saith, that on Gods part, and in regard of the purpose of his will, Christ died for every man without exception. And whereas it is thought to be an hard speech, to say that God would have some particular men deprived of grace and redemption by Christ, let us well consider this one thing, and it will not seeme strange, no not in mans reason. God created man in his owne image, in righteousnesse, and true holinesse, and he gave unto him a blessed estate in an earthly Paradise, and that not onely for himselfe, but for all his posterity: for whatsoever he received by creation, hee received not onely for himselfe, but for his posterity, being then a publike man, and bearing the person of whole mankinde, both in the state of his innocency, and in his fall: whereupon *Adam* falling from that happy estate, all mankind being in him, fell with him, and so lost Gods image, and that good estate which they enjoyed by creation in *Adam*. Now consider this well, if God had never indued man with grace, nor given him meanes to come by happinesse, and yet had excluded him from all meanes of grace and happinesse, this indeed might have seemed hard; but considering that by creation hee gave man happinesse, and likewise ability to persevere in the same, if he would; is it any marvell, seeing all men have of themselves lost their owne felicity, that some should bee deprived of it for ever? nay, rather it is a wonder that all are not condemned which come of *Adam*: for God in his justice without all cruelty might have condemned every man: and indeed it is his endlesse mercy, that he hath given Christ to be a Saviour unto some, and that any are made pertakers of this salvation by Jesus Christ.

God deales not harsly in denying redemption to some.

Secondly, Christ here saith of some, *I never knew you*: yet speaking of others he saith, *I know my sheepe*, Joh.10.14. and againe, *I know whom I have chosen*, Joh. 13.18. and *Paul* saith, *The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 2.19. Now from these places we may gather, that there is an eternall worke of God, whereby he puts a difference and distinction betweene man and man, angell and angell, acknowledging some to bee his owne, and denying the same of others. If God himselfe had not avouched this in the Word, no man might have taught it; but being here plainly propounded, it is with all reverence to bee acknowledged and received: and that it may be the better conceived, two points are here to be handled: First, upon what ground and reason God doth know some to be his, and doth not know nor acknowledge others for his owne. Secondly, what is the fruit of this knowledge of God in man. For the first, why God should know some to be his, and not others, no other reason can be given, but Gods good pleasure alone: Matth. 11. 25. Christ setteth downe this distinction betweene man and man, saying that *his Father hath hid the mysteries of the kingdome of heaven from some, and revealed the same to other*: now what is the cause hereof? *It is even so, O Father*, (saith he) *because it so pleaseth thee*. So, Rom.9.v.13. and 18. in *Iacob* and *Esau Paul* sheweth this distinction of mankind, *I have loved Iacob, and hated Esau*, saith the Lord: neither did this difference come from their workes, either good or evill: for this difference God put betweene them, before *either of them had done good or evill*: but it is wholly ascribed to the will of God, *who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will hardeneth.* This must not seeme strange unto us: we permit unto men to use their owne discretion in their owne affaires, and this is a sufficient reason to stop any mans mouth; *Is it mine owne, may I not doe with mine owne what I will?* Again, in Princes Proclamations we submit our selves to this clause, (*It is our pleasure,*) so likewise, a man having a flocke of sheepe, may send some of them to the satting for the slaughter, and others keepe for breed; this God permitteth unto man; and it is not counted cruelty amongst men: now if wee give this liberty unto man over the creature, why should we not much more give it to the Creator himselfe over man, seeing the basest and least creature is something in regard of man, but man is nothing unto God? and therefore though these mysteries cannot be comprehended by reason, yet even in reason we may see some resemblance of the truth and equity of them, which must move us with reverence to submit our selves unto the soverangne will and pleasure of God herein.

Gods election and reprobation proved.

Upon this ground of difference and distinction betweene man and man, we may well be admonished to beware of the error of some Divines, who thus define of Gods wil touching mans estate; They say it is the first will of God, that every man in the world should be saved, if they would, and therefore (say they) hee ministers unto them all helpes both of nature and grace, whereby they may repent and beleeve if they wil. And having laid downe this his first will, he then (say they) foresees that some men will not beleeve, nor persevere in the faith: and hereupon it is (in their conceit) that hee will not know some men for his owne. Again, foreseeing that others will beleeve and persevere in faith, them hee knowes and acknowledgeth to be his; dealing herein like unto a good father that hath many sonnes, who would have them all to doe well, and to have each one a good portion; but seeing that some will not become frugall and obedient, hee changeth his minde, and doth disinherit them: or like unto a good Prince, who would have all his subjects to doe well; but seeing some to be

The ground of Gods predestination.

Foreseene workes are not the ground of Gods decree.

be rebels, hee is of another minde, and willeth their death. *Answe.* But this opinion is a meere invention of mans braine; for whereas they say, that God by a second act of his will acknowledgeth some for his owne, and not others; upon the foresight of their faith and unbeleefe, whereas by his first will he would have all men to be saved; it is not true; for the first will of God is, to know some, and not to know others; the ground whereof is his good pleasure alone, and no foresee one workes in them. And therefore it cannot be that hee should will all men to be saved equally, *Cain* as well as *Abel*, *Iudas* as well as *Peter*. Againe, their opinion confutes it selfe: for God foresees men faith and unbeleefe, because he hath decreed the same, and his decree depends upon his owne will alone: and therefore unleesse wee make the same thing in the same respect, both the cause and the effect, we cannot make foresee workes the ground of difference between man and man. Then their comparisons are not fit: a father would have all his children to doe well, and to enjoy his portion: true, and more than that, he would make all his children to doe well, if it lay in his power; neither would he disinherit any, if it lay in his power to make them good: the change of his purpose is in disinheriting his sonne, arises from the impotency of his will, that cannot doe that he would. And the same must bee said of the will of Princes toward their subjects: but if there should bee such a will in God to have all men saved, if he could save them; then undoubtedly all men should be saved, *for who hath resisted his will?* nay, whatsoever the Lord willeth, that doth hee in heaven, in earth, and every where, Psa. 4. 32.

A second point to bee considered in the distinction of men, whereby God knoweth some to be his, and doth not acknowledge some others for his, is the fruit of this knowledge of God. It is an effectuall and powerfull knowledge, working mutuall and strange effects in mans heart, towards God: for from this, that God knoweth some to be his, there followeth another knowledge in mans heart, whereby he knoweth God to be his God. So Christ saith, Joh. 10. 14. *I know my sheepe, and am knowne of mine.* Looke as the Sun casts downe his beames upon us, by meanes whereof we againe see the body of the Sunne; even so the knowledge of God, whereby hee knoweth us for his, worketh in our hearts a knowledge of God in us, whereby we know him for our God. So Gal. 4. 9. *Seeing yee know God, or rather are knowne of God:* so that the knowledge of God, whereby he knoweth us to be his, is the ground of our knowledge of him to be our God. Againe, in this knowledge of God, whereby he knoweth his elect, is contained his love towards them; for he knoweth and accepteth of man, and therefore loveth him: and this brings forth in man love to God againe. *We love God, because he hath loved us first.* 1 Joh. 4. 19. So likewise

A God by his knowledge chuseth us to be his peculiar people: and hence comes our chusing of God to be our God; for looke as the seale sets a print in the wax like unto it selfe, so the knowledge of God bringeth forth such fruits in us to God-ward, as therewith God beareth and manifesteth towards us.

On the other side, there be some whom God never knew, and the fruits hereof in them, be the fruits of justice; God not knowing them, they know not God: and the fruits of this knowledge, as love, and giving their hearts unto God, they have not. Indeed the sinnes which men commit, come not from this, that God knoweth them not, but from the corrupt will of man: and yet these wants of knowledge, of love, and faith to God, as they are punishments, come from this, that God doth not know, nor acknowledge men for his.

B Now whereas this knowledge of God is powerfull in his Elect, to produce from them true knowledge, affiance, and love of God againe; wee are to be admonished to labour to feele in our hearts these graces, which are the impressions and fruits of Gods knowledge of us, that by them we may be able to say, I know God to be my God, and Christ my Redeemer. Let us therefore labour to know God aright, and to love God in Christ, and in his members, by true love; and to chuse the true God to be our God, bestowing our hearts and affections on him: for by these graces we shall know certainly that God knoweth us, loveth, and chuseth us for his sonnes and daughters in Christ: because these graces in us are the proper fruits of the knowledge and love of God towards us: even as wee may know the Princes broad seale by the forme of it in wax, though wee never see the seale itselfe. And on the contrary, we must take heed of that heavy judgement of God, whereby men goe on without knowledge, love, and affiance in God; for these are fearfull tokens of his wrath, befalling those whom hee never knew.

The Vse. 1. Whereas God knoweth some men for his owne, and will not acknowledge the same of others, and that onely upon his will and pleasure, we may see here a wonderfull and unsearchable mystery; which first of all ought to stirre us up, not to plead with God, but in an holy reverence to wonder at, and to admire his unspeakable power and soveraignty over his creature: Rom. 11. 32. *God hath shut up all under unbeleefe, that he might have mercy on all*, saith the Apostle. Now he doth not reason the case further, but there stayeth himselfe, with an admiration of Gods wonderfull power and wisdome, crying out, *O the deepnesse of the riches, both of the wisdome and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out!* ver. 33. 2. This must strike our hearts with feare and trembling towards God in regard of his judgements: the Apostle *Paul* speaking to the Gentiles of Gods ancient

A motive to know and love God.

The Vse of the knowledge of God in regard of his.

D

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ancient people, saith, *The Iewes are cut off through unbeleefe, and thou standest by faith;* and thereupon makes this use in to the Gentiles. *Bewe high minded but feare*, Rom. 11. 20. 2. Hence wee are taught, not to sooth up ourselves (as usually we doe) on hope of mercie in the death of Christ, without some ground hereof through true grace; but rather with feare and trembling, so long as wee have time, to labour in the meanes of salvation, which is Gods word, prayer, Sacraments, to become true members of Christ, because wee may deceive ourselves with a vaine profession: for though Gods mercie bee endlesse in it selfe, yet it admits restraint to us-ward; and indeed shall never bee extended to all, nay not to many that in their life time made full account thereof in their vaine persuasions.

The reprobate never had true faith.

A third point here to bee observed is this; that such as professed Christs name here on earth, and yet after shall be condemned, never had true faith, nor true repentance, found love, nor hope; they might have some kinde of faith, I confesse, and many other excellent gifts; but if they had had true faith, thereby they should have pleased God, and beene approved of Christ, and so at some time also, have beene accepted and acknowledged of him for his owne. For this wee must learne and hold as the truth of God, that where true faith, love, and hope are truly wrought, there they remaine for ever, at least in the root: they may seeme for a time to be lost, but yet never can bee quite extinct, *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance*, Rom. 11. 29.

Fourthly, here it is plaine, that those whom Christ will not five, hee never knew; hence it followes, that whom he knowes to be his, them hee will know to bee his for ever. This point must be remembered, because it is the true foundation and ground of the salvation of mens soules: we are said to be saved by faith, and by the word of God, yet only as by meanes, not as causes: but the only cause of our salvation, and of the meanes that brings us thereto, is *this knowledge of God*, whereby he accepteth and approveth us to be his owne.

Elect never fall away.

Hence wee may gather, that those who are elect unto salvation, shall never perish; for whom God once knowes to bee his, them hee knowes to be his for ever: and therefore Matt. 24. 24. it is made a *thing impossible that the elect should perish:* and the Apostle takes it for granted, that *the election of God is unchangeable*, Rom. 9. 11. remaining ever, according to his purpose. This knowledge of God, is *that foundation which remaineth sure*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. The first grace of all is Gods favour, chusing some men to be his of his meere good will; and this first grace, to whomsoever it is vouchsafed, remaineth for ever, admitting no change nor alteration, nor interruption. This doctrine must not be conceiled, as the stay of our faith, and a sure foundation of sound comfort in any di-

A stresse: for true beleevers in time of affliction since in themselves much unbeleefe, and great proneesse to fall away from God. Yet here they have a sure stay whereon to rest, they must goe out of themselves, and fasten their faith on Gods election, knowing hence, that though they be fraile and subject to fall away of themselves, yet their salvation remaines sure, grounded on the knowledge and election of God. So the Apostle *Paul* comforts himselfe and the godly, Rom. 8. 32, 33. *It is God that justifies, who shall condemne?* and verse 35. *Who shall sever us from the love of God in Christ*, whereby he loveth us? And indeed, if a man have received true assurance of Gods favour, though but once in all his life; yet by that one figure he may assure himselfe of his salvation, upon the ground, that Gods love is unchangeable, though ever after he live in temptation; *For whom God loveth, he loveth to the end*, Joh. 13. 1.

Depart from me. This is Christs commandment to those whom hee never knew, though they professed his name; and it is a most fearefull commandement, being all one with that, Matth. 25. 41. *Goe yee cursed into everlasting fire.*

Now hence we may gather, that the second death is properly a separation from the comfortable fellowship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and withall, a sense and feeling of Gods wrath in that separation. This appeares by the contrarie, for life everlasting stands in fellowship with God the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost. Now here a question may bee asked, concerning the suffering of Christ; for our doctrine is; that hee suffered the second death: whether then was he severed from God in his suffering? *Answer.* Christ our Saviour on the crosse stood in our roome and stead, hee bare upon him the sinnes of his elect, and for substance, the whole punishment due to the same, which was both the first and second death: but yet concerning the suffering of the second death, there remaines some difficultie. Touching it therefore wee must hold this ground, that our Saviour Christ suffered the second death, so farre forth as the suffering thereof might stand with the union of his two natures, and with the holinesse and dignitie of his person: and here these caveats must be marked:

D *I. Caveat.* That in his manhood hee endured a verie true separation from the Godhead, and from his Father: yet not in regard of subsisting and being, but of sense and feeling only: and therefore hee cried, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee?* having for a time no sense of Gods favour, but only the feeling of his wrath and displeasure.

II. Caveat. In his passion he did indure the sorrowes of the second death; he did not die the second death, for then hee should have beene overcome and utterly separated from his father in subsisting and being: but he suffered the second death, and in suffering overcame it; as a

When in Scripture death is taken for death.

How Christ suffered the second death.

man may be at the point of death, and feele the paines of the first death, and yet recover.

III. Caveat. Christ endured the paines of the damned, yet not in that manner which the damned doe; for hee endured them on the crosse, they in the place of the damned; Christ suffered them for a while, they endure them for ever; Christ suffered the second death, yet so as it prevailed not against him; but the damned are overwhelmed of it, it prevailes over them, and causeth them to blaspheme God: now their blasphemie increaseth their sinne, and their sinne causeth their torments to bee multiplied for ever. This Doctrine is suitable to the word of God, and to reason: for in mans reason, the death of the body could not bee a remedie to such persons as are condemned to a double death both of bodie and soule.

Vses. 1. Seeing the second death is a separation of man from God for ever, wee must labour in this life to have some true fellowship with God the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost: that having it once, wee may enjoy the same for ever. This fellowship we shall come unto in the right use of the Word and Sacraments, and Prayer; for in the Word and Sacraments God condescends to speake unto us, and to deale familiarly with us, and in Prayer wee talke with God.

II. Vse. Note also to whom this commandement is spoken, *Depart from me*; namely, to such as come neere unto God with their lips, but yet keepe their hearts farre from him: in consideration whereof wee must not content our selves to professe the name of Christ outwardly, but wee must draw neere to God with all our affections, our love, joy, feare, and confidence, and yeeld obedience to his commandements; so shall wee escape this fearefull commandement of finall departure from him.

Yee workers of iniquitie] This is the reason of the commandement: for the better understanding whereof this question must bee handled: How these men, that make such profession, can bee called workers of iniquitie: many of whom undoubtedly, lived in a civil & unblameable life outwardly, and could not bee charged with any horrible capitall sinnes. *Ans.* There bee many great sinnes for which men may bee called workers of iniquitie, and be as vile in the sight of God as the murtherer and adulterer, though for outward life they be unblameable: as first *hypocrisie*, which is proper to the professors of religion, when as they content themselves to hold religion outwardly, but yet doe not bring their hearts, nor conforme their lives to their outward profession. Secondly, to professe love and worship to God, and yet not to performe duties of love and mercie unto men: for wee must love and serve God in the workes of brotherly love. Thirdly, to have the heart addicted to this or that sinne or sinnes; whether secret or open, in regard of the world, it skilleth not: for this is to bee a worker of iniquitie in Gods sight, when the heart taketh a settled delight in any sinne. And they are not so called because their iniquitie is always outward and seene to the world. Lastly, all the sinnes of the first Table, especially the sinnes against the two first Commandements, as not to know God, not to love God, or to trust in him above all, not to worship him in heart and life together; these are all works of iniquitie, greater than the sinnes of the second Table in their kinde: and in regard of these also, professours are called *workers of iniquitie.*

Vses. I. Whereas Christ calleth those professours, *workers of iniquitie*, whose profession covered their sinnes from mens sight; wee may note, that Christ is a verie strict observer of mens wayes, even of the most secret sinnes, which appeare not to the world: though men may bee deceived by professours in this world, yet Christ cannot bee deceived, but at the last day of judgement hee will finde them out what they be. Many deceive themselves with a persuasion of mercie, because Christ is a Saviour, and so presume to goe on in sinne; but they must know, that Christ is also a severe Judge, who doth straitly observe mens sinnes, and will condemne the workers of iniquitie, as well as pardon them that repent: and therefore wee must not flatter our selves to live in sinne, because hee is a Saviour; but rather feare to sinne, because he is a severe Judge against all iniquitie.

II. This shewes that Christ preferres an honest and godly life above most worthy gifts, even before the gifts of Prophecie and Miracles; and therefore our principall care must bee, to shame our hearts and lives to true obedience unto our God in all his Commandements.

III. This must stirre us up to true and unfained repentance. If wee have not yet repented, it must move us to begin it: if wee have repented, we must doe it more; for Christ will pronounce a fearefull sentence of condemnation upon many professours, because they live in sin, though they have prophesied in his name, and cast out Devils, and done many great workes; yet because they have beene in heart addicted to some sinnes, hee shall say unto them at the last day, *Depart from mee*, and, *Goe yee cursed into everlasting fire.* The horrour whereof, seeing Christ hath so long before made it knowen unto us, ought to move us to humble our selves, to turne unto God, and to breake off the course of our sinnes, even in the purpose of our hearts. And if wee will not now tremble and turne, the day will come when wee shall heare a fearefull commandement, and obey it, and not bee able to turne from it: but if wee shall now turne to God by true repentance and new obedience, wee shall in that day heare the blessed voice of absolution upon our selves, when as the fearefull sentence of condemnation shall be pronounced upon others.

IV. Whereas many men shall be condemned,

Christ marks the most secret sins.

How Christ preferres a godly life.

A strong motive to repentance.

ned, because in heart they have beene addicted to some open or secret sinnes, wee must in the feare of God labour to purge our hearts from all sinne, so as wee bee not addicted to any one sinne, with purpose to live therein: yea, wee must labour to turne our selves from everie evill way, from sinnes in thought, in affections, in behaviour and actions. The purpose of our heart must be, not to live in any one sinne, so as if we fall, wee may yet truly say, it was against our purpose and intent: and therefore we must labour to be renued in the spirit of our minides, even in the most secret part of our soules. It is not enough to leave sinne when it leaves us, by reason of weaknesse, or want of opportunitie: thus doth many an aged man, who having lived in lewdnesse and lust all his youth, doth at length, by reason of weaknesse in old age, leave those sinnes in practice; but yet his heart is still addicted to them, and therefore even then, when hee cannot goe without a staffe, will hee take great delight in rehearsing and remembring the trickes of his youth. Now this man hath no repentance: for his delight in the remembrance of sinne past, is all one before God, as if he had lived still in the practice thereof: our prayer therefore must be with *David*, to the Lord continually, that hee would *incline our hearts unto his commandements, and not to covetousnesse*, or any other sinne, Psal. 119. 36.

Purge the heart from a purpose of sinning.

v. 24 *Whosoever then heareth of mee these words, and doth the same, I will liken him to a wise man which hath builded his house on a rocke,*

25 *And the raine fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was grounded on a rocke.*

After the deliverie of many notable instructions in this Sermon of our Saviour Christ, whereby hee hath sufficiently shewed himselfe to be the true Prophet and Doctor of his Church: in this verse, and those which follow, to the 28. he comes to lay downe the conclusion of this excellent Sermon, wherein hee doth stirre up his hearers to a notable duties; namely, that they should not make light account of his Doctrine, contenting themselves barely to heare, reade, or to learne the same; but fruther, to goe about the practice thereof in their lives and conversations. And for the effecting hereof, hee layes downe here at large, the fruit of true obedience to the Word. In this conclusion are these points contained: I. A maine duties to be done of all his hearers; that is, *to heare and doe the words of Christ: Whosoever heareth these my words, and doth the same.* II. The propertie of this duties; *it is a note of great wisdome: I will liken him to a wise man, &c.* III. The fruit of this duties: *Safetie and securitie against all perils of bodie and soule*, in the 25. verse: all which are amplified by their contraries, in the 26. and 27. verses, as we shall see in their place.

Conclusion of Christs Sermon.

The first point is the maine duties of everie good hearer, namely, to joyne practice with knowledge of the word of Christ. This duties is oft urged upon us by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 2. 13. *Not the hearers of the Law, but the doers thereof shall be justified before God:* And Saint *James* stands long on this duties, Jam. 1. 22. *Be yee doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your owne soules:* which after he enforceth both by the vanitie of hearing without doing, v. 23, 24. and by the blessing that accompanies obedient hearing, v. 25. and Luk. 11. 27, 28. when a woman in admiration at Christs Doctrine, pronounced *her blessed that bare him*; Christ answered, *Nay, rather blessed are they that heare the word of God, and keepe it.* And in the Parable of the Sower, Matth. 13. there are foure kindes of hearers, three bad, and one only good, who doe heare, know, receive, embrace the word of God, and withall bring forth fruit plentifully. And naturall reason may perswade us of the weight of this duties; for the best learning that men have in humane things is to little, or of no use, without practice: much lesse can divine Doctrine then profit a man without obedience be joyned therewith.

The duties of everie good hearer.

Vse. The consideration hereof must move us to pray to God the Father in the name of Christ, that he would vouchsafe his Spirit unto us, whereby our hearts might be inclined, disposed and bent to an unfained love and obedience of Gods precepts, delivered in his holy Word, because it is our dutie to live in the practice of that wee heare. Yea, wee must pray so to performe obedience in our life, that our consciences may not only not accuse us, but also excuse us before God in regard thereof; or at least, in regard of our true endevour and desire to obey. This dutie being practised, will minister true comfort unto us in time of distresse, yea, in the fearefull case of death it selfe. Hereby did good King *Hezekias* comfort himselfe at his death, *that he had walked before the Lord with an upright and perfect heart*, Isay 38. And the word of God is plaine for this comfort, *If our hearts condemne us not, then wee have boldnesse towards God*, 1 Joh. 3. 21. allways provided, we have a good understanding of our dutie to God, for an ignorant conscience will falsly excuse.

II. Point. The propertie of this dutie. It is a part of great wisdome, for he that heareth and obeyeth, is the only wise man; *I will liken him* (saith Christ) *unto a wise man.* This point is likewise with care to bee remembred, that the

Conclude hearing with wisdom.

hearing and doing of the word of God, is a speciall part of true wisdome: this is notably verefied in the 32. Psalme, which is intituled *Davids learning*; and indeed it is a notable Psalme of learning, containing the summe of all religion; which *David* bringeth to these two heads, his repentance and new obedience. So Deut. 4. 6. the peoples obedience to Gods commandements, is counted by *Moses* their wisdome: and for this cause hee there saith, *They shall bee counted the wisest people under Heaven*, because they served and obeyed the true God: to which purpose it is said, *The feare of God is the beginning of wisdome, a good understanding have all they that doe thereafter*, Psal. 111. 10.

Hence we learne these instructions: 1. All Superiours, Magistrates, Masters, and Parents, are bound to go before their inferiours in wisdome, as they are above them in authoritie; and therefore considering obedience is true wisdome, everie Superiour ought to goe before his inferiours in obedience to Gods Commandements: for this only is true wisdome, without which all other wisdome is but folly and madnesse.

2. Hence all Students that professe themselves to seeke for wisdome and learning, are taught especially to give themselves to learne and obey the will & Commandements of God; for this is true wisdome, both before God and man. And it is a great blemish and disgrace for any man of knowledge, to lead a loose & dissolute life; this argues their want of Gods feare, which is the verie ground of true wisdome.

3. This gives a good caveat to ignorant persons, who perswade themselves they may continue in their ignorance, because they are not book-learned; but they deceive themselves, for obedience is true wisdome; and therefore they must labour for so much knowledge as will bring them to this wisdome here commended.

Now to come more specially to this true wisdome, we must search out wherein it lieth. This is expressed in these words, *which hath builded his house on a rocke*: which S. *Luke* setteth downe more largely, chap. 6.48. saying, *he digged deepe, and laid his foundation on a rocke*. In which words, three parts of this wisdome are propounded: 1. *to dig deepe*: 2. *to make choice of a rocke for a foundation*: and 3. *to build thereon*. The *builder* is the professour of the name of Christ; and this *digging deepe* to finde out a fit foundation, signifieth thus much; that hee that would make sure his owne salvation, must come to a deepe search and examination of his owne corrupt heart, that hee may know the iniquitie thereof: as also hee must renounce himselfe and his pleasures; and whatsoever may hinder him in this building hee must cast out: for without this deepe search and ransacking of the heart, there can bee no sure foundation laid, nor certaintie of salvation attained.

The second point of this wisdome, is to chuse a foundation to lay our salvation upon; and that is *the rocke Christ Jesus himself, God and man, hee is the chiefe corner-stone, on which the whole building is coupled*, Ephes. 2. 20, 21. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for among men there is given no other name under Heaven, by which wee must be saved*, than Christ Jesus only, Acts 4. 12. and *no other foundation can any man lay, than that which is already laid, which is Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Christ is the *rocke and corner-stone*, and true Christians are *living stones built upon him*, 1 Pet. 2. 5. As for our works, they are fruits, but no part of this foundation, unlesse to them that build on the sand, like foolish builders.

Thirdly, having found a good foundation we must build thereon. Our soules and our salvation must be builded on Christ. This is done by our faith in Christ: for as mutuall love joynes one man unto another; so true faith makes us one with Christ: Eph. 3. 17. the Holy Ghost saith, that *Christ doth dwell in our hearts by faith*: and Psal. 125. 1. *He that trusts in the Lord, is as mount Sion that cannot be removed*. Yet here two caveats must bee remembred; *I.* That Christ is a rocke, yet not everie way that man frames in his owne heart, but only so as hee hath offered himselfe in the promise of the Gospell, which is the word of the covenant of grace. And for this cause wee must labour that this word of Gods grace may bee rooted and grounded in our hearts by faith: for it is all one to beleeve in Christ, and to beleeve the Word that reveales Christ unto us, so saith our Saviour, *He that refuseth me, and receiveth not my Word, hath one that judgeth him*, Joh. 12. 48. And, *If yee abide in me, and my words abide in you*, Joh. 15. 7. Wee therefore must be like the good ground: for as it receives and keepes the good seed, so doth the good heart receive and keepe the word of grace, which being rooted in our hearts keepes us united unto Christ, and therefore it is called the *ingraffed word*, Jam. 1. 21. which being mingled with faith in our hearts is profitable, for it knits us fast to Christ, and makes us grow up in him unto perfection. *II. Caveat.* We must set all the maine affections of our heart on Christ: for hereby must we shew forth our faith. We must so esteeme and love Christ, as that in regard of him *we count all things losse, and dung*, with the Apostle; yea, we must so delight in Christ, that we desire him wholly, and receive nothing into our hearts but Christ alone. *Thomas* desired but *to put his finger into his side*, but we must goe further, and desire to have our soules washed in the blood that issued thence, and to have our hearts possessed by his Spirit, whom hee giveth to his Church.

Vse. Seeing Christ Jesus is the rocke of our salvation, our duties is to have our hearts rooted and founded on Christ. They which be as the stony ground, heare and receive the Word, and it takes some rooting in them, and brings forth some fruit: but as the rooting is not deepe,

so the fruit is never ripe, and therefore when heat commeth, it withereth: so it is with professors; a man may be one in name, and bring forth some fruit of the Word which hee heares, and yet be deceived in the matter of his salvation, because he is not rooted and founded in Christ. This is the point which *Paul* stands much upon in sundrie of his Epistles: for shew of grace will not serve the turne. Indeed in these happie dayes of peace any grace makes a man seeme to be a Christian: but when the parching heat of persecution comes, unlesse we be thoroughly rooted in Christ, wee shall never continue to the end, nor bring forth fruit with patience.

Ephes. 2. 20, 21. Col. 2. 7.

The fruit of true obedience.

III. Point. The *fruit* of this true obedience, in which men by faith build themselves on Christ Jesus, is securitie and safetie against all temptations of the Devill, the flesh, and the world: meant by *the standing of the house that was built upon the rocke, notwithstanding the falling of the raine, the beating of the floods, and the blowing of the winds*, vers. 25. A most notable fruit which nothing else but true obedience can procure unto us: wealth cannot minister this comfortable securitie; nay, the more wealth, oftimes the more trouble; and unto many, riches are the causes of a fearefull downefall. No strength of man, nor power of any Princes can procure this safetie, and yet Christ vouchsafeth the same to them that heare his Word and keepe it.

The consideration hereof, must move us to bee most willing and readie to performe obedience to that holy word of God, which wee readie and heare: for such a benefit comes by it, as no creature in the world can procure besides: and the rather wee must inure our selves hereto, because our sinnes deserve an end of these happie dayes of peace, and we may justly looke for the black dayes of persecution, which when they come will surely bee our ruine, unlesse in these dayes of peace we heare the Word and doe it.

A motive to obedience.

True faith cannot be lost.

Secondly, from this fruit of true obedience wee may gather, that hee which once hath true faith in Christ rooted in his heart, shall never lose the same either wholly or finally, but shall continue therein unto the end, and enjoy the fruit thereof for ever. For by faith a man is truly built on Christ, as on a most sure foundation, so as neither temptations nor persecutions can drive him off: though they may assault and shake him, yet they can never throw him down: but if a man might quite lose his faith, then might hee bee beaten downe that is built on Christ, which thing this Text denieth.

True beleevers with have their trials.

Lastly, this teacheth us, that he that is built on Christ by faith, must looke for fearefull trials and temptations: for hee is like an house built on the sea banke, against which wind, and raine, and waves, doe all beat and rage. Gods servants must not looke to goe to Heaven in ease, but they must wait for trials and temptations comming hand in hand, as wind and raine, and wind and wave commonly doe: and therefore the more carefull and earnestly must wee labour, to bee surely grounded on Christ, that though they assault us, yet they may not throw us downe.

v. 26 ***But whosoever heareth these my words, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which hath builded his house upon the sand:***

27 ***And the raine fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and the fall thereof was great.***

In these verses our Saviour Christ layeth downe foure other points contrarie to the former, belonging to an evill hearer. The I. is the fault and bad practice of an evill hearer: *to heare Christs words, and not to doe the same*: II. the propertie of this vice: it is *a point of extreme folly*: III. the practice of this folly: *in building upon the sands*: IV. the fruit and issue of this building: *fearefull ruine and destruction*. Of these in order.

The practice of a bad hearer.

I. Point. The practice of a bad hearer, from which Christ would terrifie all men in this place is, *To heare, and not to doe*. This is no small fault. The ground that receiveth seed and raine, both in measure and season, and yet bringeth forth either bad fruit, or none at all, is by all men condemned for bad ground; the Apostle saith, it *is neere unto cursing, whose end is to be burned*, Heb. 6. 8. The waters that come and issue from under the threshold of the Sanctuarie, Ezek. 47. 1. whereby is meant the word of God, when they come into any ground they are of this nature, if they make it not fruitfull they *turne it into barrennesse*, vers. 11. A subject that knowes his Princes will, and doth it not, is indeed no better than a Rebell: how much more then is hee that heares the Word and Doctrine of salvation by Christ, and yet makes no conscience to doe the same, to bee judged for bad and barren ground, yea, for a Rebell against God himselfe. 1 Sam. 15. 23. *Samuel* telleth *Saul*, that *rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and transgression is wickednesse and idolatrie*: And the reason is plaine, for they that submit themselves to heare Godsword, are sundrie wayes bound to performe obedience. First, by the law of creation, as they are Gods creatures. Secondly, by the law of redemption, as they are Christs servants, bought by his most pretious bloud. Thirdly, in regard of their Adoption,

How all hearers are bound to obedience.

Matth.7. vers.26,27.

Adoption, as they are, or at least hold themselves to be his children in Christ: and fourthly, in regard of his merciffull providence whereof wee have daily experience: in regard of all these wee ought by way of thankfulnesse, to shew our selves obedient unto his Word. And therefore he that heares the word of God, and will not doe the same, sinneth grievously against God, which in it kinde God hateth as the sinne of witchcraft. Now this sinne of disobedience is a common sinne: Wee are all hearers, but where almost is the man that answerably is a doer? Men content themselves with the bare action of hearing, like unto the Papists, who thinke God is well served with the worke done: but the principall thing wee omit, which is the treasuring up of Gods word in our hearts, that upon just occasion wee might practise the same: yea, which yet is more lamentable, men are so farre from yeelding conscionable obedience to the Word, that the endeyour thereunto is commonly judged superfluous niceneſse and curious precisenesse: but this sinne of hearing and not doing, will bring many fearefull judgements upon us, unlesse by true repentance it bee cut off.

A

II. Point. The propertie of this bad practice. It is a point of great folly: *He that heareth and doeth not, shall be likened unto a foolish man.* This the Author of all wisdom Christ himselfe avoucheth: and the Holy Ghost by S. *Iames* doth notably describe this part of folly; *They that be hearers and not doers, deceive themselves, being like unto a man that beholdeth his naturall face in a glasse:* either to spie out some spot, or discerne his owne countenance; *but when he hath considered himselfe, he goeth his way, and forgetteth immediately what manner of one he was.*

Against this folly will further appeare in this: if a man should shew forth great parts of wisdome in sundrie things pertaining to his bodie, and yet faile in the maine point of all, everie man would count his wisdome but folly: Now such are all they that heare the word of God, and doe it not: they shew some parts of wisdome in comming to heare, and in seeking to understand: and yet if they come not to practise, they faile in the maine point of their salvation, which indeed ought to bee sought for in the first place.

I. By this we may see how to correct and reforme our foolish conceit wee have of men in the world. Wee thinke of those that have worldly wisdome to bee able to goe beyond others in the greater affaires of this life, that they are the only men, deserving best place of government both in Church & Common-wealth: But we must know, that these men, though they have never so good heads for the things of this life, yet if they faile in the knowledge of this dutie to God, or in the practice thereof, are here by our Saviour Christ noted with the brand of folly. The rich man in the Gospell had notable forecast for the augmenting of his wealth: when his substance increased, hee could pull downe his barnes and make them greater, but yet because hee failed in the maine point of his salvation, he is noted for *a rich foole*, Luk.12.20. And therefore in all sorts and estates of men, he is the wisest, who hath grace to know, and answerably to obey the will of God.

II. This must excite us to a carefull endevour after true obedience to God in all his commaudements. Wee all desire to bee freed from the reproach of folly among men, and wee take it for a great disgrace to bee counted fooles: well, if we would avoid this ignominie indeed, let us bee willing to heare, and carefull to obey the word of Christ, both in thought, word, and deed: otherwise, let men judge as they list, God will account us fooles.

A motive to obedience.

B

III. Point. The practice of this folly, which consists in this; that *he builds his house upon the sands:* whereby is signified another thing concerning the soule; namely, to build our salvation upon insufficient foundation; and that doth everie hearer of Gods word that makes not conscience of obedience: for profession is as it were the erecting or rearing of an house: and the not performing obedience withall, is the setting of this house upon the sands. There be three sorts of men that thus build upon the sands: I. The Papist that will be justified and saved by Christ: but yet withall hee must have works of grace to concurre for the increase of his justification, and for the accomplishment of his salvation. Now this is to build upon the sands, when wee joyne workes with Christ in the matter of salvation: for though Christ be a sure rocke in himselfe, yet if we will fortifie him by our works, we fall from this rocke into perdition, and our foundation is no better than sand, Gal.5.2. *Behold I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing:* and v.4. *Ye are fallen from Christ, whosoever will be justified by the Law:* In which places the Apostle labors to overthrow the opinion of the Galatians learned of the false Apostles, which was, to joyne works with Christ in the matter of justification: Rom. 9. 22. *Christ became unto the Iewes a rocke of offence, when as they would be saved by the works of the Law.*

Who build on the sands.
I. Papists.
Concil. Trid. sess.6. cap.9.10.16.

C

D

A second sort that build upon the sands, are the common Protestants; by whom I meane such as beare the name of Christians, and yet rest themselves contented and satisfied with their civill lives; thinking, that because they abstaine from outward evill and grosse sins, and doe no man wrong, therefore God will hold them excused: whereupon they professe religion more for obedience to the lawes of men, than for conscience to God. But this will not serve the turne, these men though they professe Christ outwardly, yet in deed they deny him: for by their course (though it may be they thinke not so) they will needs become saviours, and so Christs unto themselves: which thing they doe, when as they stay themselves on their

2 Common Protestants.

owne

Matth.7. vers.26.

owne civill life. The Scribes and Pharisees for outward actions were very godly, and many of them lived unblameable: but yet Christ saith to his disciples, Matth.5.20. *Except your righteousnesse exceed the righteousnesse of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdome of heaven.* And *Paul* goes somewhat further, speaking of himselfe when he was an Apostle, 1 Cor. 4.4. *I know nothing by my selfe, and yet am I not thereby justified.* This was a notable thing, for a man to walke so uprightly in his calling, that his owne sanctified conscience could not accuse him of any offence therein, either against God or man; and yet this is nothing in the matter of justification, wherein the righteousnesse of the whole law must bee fulfilled, which cannot be done by the obedience of sanctification, which is not perfect in this life: and therefore *Paul* desires, not to be found of God therein, Philip.3.9. much lesse by civill righteousnesse, which consisting onely in outward behaviour, may be in those that never have the spirit of grace to renue their soules, as the Apostle witnesseth of the Gentiles, that *some of them doe by nature the things contained in the Law:* that is, outwardly: But without the spirit they are none of Christs, *for he that hath not the Spirite of God is none of his,* Rom. 8.9. neither can possibly enter into the kingdome of God: for *except a man be borne againe of water, and of the holy Spirit,* that is, be regenerate by the holy Ghost, *he cannot enter into the king dome of God.*

John 3.5.

3 The more forward Protestant.

The third sort of those that build upon the sand, is the Protestant that is more forward in religion than the former: I meane such as doe heare the word of God ordinarily, and receive it with joy, bringing forth some good fruit thereof. It had beene hard, I must confesse, to have called such men foolish builders, without good warrant out of the Word. But Jesus Christ hath revealed them to be such as build upon the sand: for in the parable of the Sower, Luke 8.13. *They that receive the seed in stonie ground, are they which heare the Word, and incontinently with joy receive it: but they have no roots, which for a while beleeve,* there is some fruit, *but in time of temptation they goe away:* of such S. *Iohn* speaketh, John 6.66. *From that time many of his disciples went backe, and walked no more with him.* They were his followers, and heard him gladly, or else they should never have beene called his Disciples, but their going backe doth plainely, discover their sandie foundation: of such also he speaketh in his Epistle, *They went out from us, but they were not of us:* for a time they professed Christ, and so were among the faithfull, but when trouble and persecution came, because of the Word, then they went away, wanting true humilitie and sound faith, whereby they should have beene built upon Christ; which want in time of peace they could not espie.

1 John 2.19.

Vses. I. Seeing that men which heare and receive the word of God with joy, may build on a sandie foundation, we must not content our selves herewith, but further pray to God for this one blessing, that he would write his word in our hearts by the finger of his Spirit, as he writ the Law on tables of stone in Mount Sina: for our hearts are deceitfull, as the Prophet speaketh, and in the time of peace will counterfeit grace, which in time of triall will vanish away as the Mist before the Sunne. Now God hath promised this blessing to his Church in the new Testament, Jere.31.33. *After these dayes, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts:* and Chap. 32.40. *I will put my feare in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* This therefore we must pray for, that the word which we heare may enable us to obedience in the time of peace, and arme and strengthen us against temptation in the day of triall, and so become the power of God to our salvation.

A

Jerem.17.9.

B

II. This must move us to looke unto the deceitfulnesse of our hearts. The case is weightie, respecting the eternall state of our soules, and yet through spirituall guile may we easily deceive our selves herein: for who would not thinke himselfe to be in a good case, when he doth receive the word with joy, and bring forth some fruits thereof? This indeed is a good step towards grace, but if we goe no further we deceive our selves, this will not serve our turne in the time of triall: as yet we are but those who receive the seed on stonie ground: the graces which we make shew of, will be like the grasse on the house top, which withereth in the blade before it shoote forth. Wherefore wee must looke well to our soules, that in our profession we carrie a true heart toward God, and keepe a good conscience in our selves. And for this cause must see that we be throughly humbled in our selves for our sinnes, that we trust not in our selves, but in God, and make his mercie in Christ to be our chiefe treasure. Also we must remember that we are not our owne, but Gods: for he hath bought us, and so we must not take libertie to dispose of our selves as we list, but must subject our selves wholly to his blessed will in all things. And because he hath revealed his will in his holy Word, according to which he would have us to frame our lives, we must endevour to prove and trie what is the good will of God and acceptable, and let the obedience of our lives express our faith in God, and reverence towards his word: And if thus we make God in Christ our joy and feare in the dayes of peace, we shall be sure to finde him the Rocke of our salvation in the time of triall.

C

D

III. Seeing men may receive the word with joy, and bring forth some fruit, and yet build upon the sand, we must not content our selves with this, that we know Christ to be a Saviour, and doe embrace true religion in profession: but we must labour for the power of this knowledge in our selves, that we may know Christ to be our Saviour, and may feele the power of his death to mortifie sinne in us, and the vertue of his resurrection,

sanction, to raise and build us up to newnesse of life: for knowledge in the braine will not save the soule: saving knowledge in religion is experimentall: and he that is truly founded upon Christ, feeles the power and efficacie of his death and resurrection, effectually causing the death of sinne, and the life of grace, which both appeare by new obedience.

IV. Point. The effect and fruit of bad hearing; that is, *fearefull ruine and destruction*, resembled by the issue of building on the sands: verse 27. *The raine fell, the floods came, and the wind blew, and beat upon that house, &c.* where two things are to be noted: First, the *cause* of this fearefull ruine, *The falling of the raine, and the beating of the floods and winds*: Secondly, the *qualitie* of this ruine; it is great and fearefull, *The house fell, and the fall thereof was great.*

For the first: *Floods*, and *wind*, and *raine*, doe here betoken trialls and temptations, which are here said to befall the professours of the name of Christ. Whence we learne, that every one that doth professe true religion must looke for a day of temptation and triall. It is Gods will that whosoever taketh upon him the profession of his Name, should be tried and proved what he is. Thus he permitted *Adam* presently after his creation, to be tempted and tried by Satan; the smart whereof we all feele unto this day: and God gave *Abraham* a commandement of triall, when he bade him *take his onely sonne Isaac whom he loved, and offer him up for a burnt offering in mount Moriah*, Genes.22.1,2. So he left *Hezekias* to himselfe *to trie him, and to make knowne what was in his heart, when the Embassadours of the Princes of Babel came unto him, to inquire of the wonder which God had done in the land.* 2 Chron.32.31. And *Iohn Baptist* saith of Christ, that *he hath his fanne in his hand*, to sift and trie the good corne from chaffe, Matth.3.12. And Christ tells *Peter* that the *devill sought to winnow the Disciples as wheat*, Luke 22.31. And for the triall of his faith and patience, *God gave Iob and all that he had into Satans hands, except his life*, Job 1.12. and 2.6. And Christ tells the Church of Smyrna, Revel.1.10. *The devill shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have affliction ten dayes.* And S. *Peter* makes it a thing requisite, that the *faith* of Gods servants should be *tried by affliction, as gold is tried in the fire*, 1 Peter 1.7.

Vse. We now have by Gods mercie true religion maintained and professed among us, and are freed from the bondage of the Turke, Jew, and Papists, in regard of their Idolatries and superstitions. These are inestimable blessings, which we must labour to walke worthy of, and therefore must stand fast in our profession, and quit our selves like men in the maintenance of true religion, not suffering our selves to be deprived of it by any adversarie power: for times will come when we must be assaulted: the floods, wind, and raine of trialls and temptations will beat upon the house of our profession: for God hath so dealt with his dearest servants, and we may not looke to goe free: Now without a good foundation we shall not keepe our standing: we must therefore in this happie time of peace and truth, which is to us the day of grace and mercie, seriously labour to have our hearts indued with some good measure of lasting grace, as of sincere love, sound hope, and faith unfeined, which as good gold may abide the fire triall of afflictions. This is *Pauls* counsell to the Colossians, Chap.2.6,7. *Seeing you have received Christ Iesus the Lord, walke in him*: that is, goe on forward in the same profession: but how? *rooted and built in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have beene taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.* And when he had told the Ephesians of the *mightie spirituall enemies that they must wrestle with*, for the keeping of faith and a good conscience: he bids them *take unto themselves the whole armour of God, and put it on, that they may be able to resist and stand in the evill day*, that is, the day of triall. In earthly kingdomes every prudent and wel-governing state, will have munition in store, and men in readinesse for their defence against an enemie: and surely in Gods kingdome every one that doth professe the truth, should labour to be furnished with sound grace, that they may be able to fight for the maintenance of the faith. If an housholder knew that theeves would come upon him, he would not be taken unprovided: well, we are taught that trialls will come, and therefore let us not be unprepared.

Ephes. 6.12.

The second point in this effect is the *qualitie* of this ruine and fall; it is great and fearefull: *It fell, and the fall thereof was great.* The thing resembled hereby is most fearefull, to wit, that such professours of religion as in the dayes of peace did not joyne practice with their profession, shall fall away in the time of triall, and come to most fearefull perdition: this is the principall point that Christ here aimes at, whereby he intends to terrifie men from dissembled profession. And the consideration of it must worke effectually in our hearts: for we by Gods mercie and blessing, have had the light of the Gospel for many yeares together, in such measure as never was in this land before: so as in regard of the meanes it may be said of us, as Christ said of Capernaum, *that we are exenlified up to heaven*, Matth.11.23. The true light now shineth, and in that regard, blessed are our eyes for they see, and our eares for they heare. But yet though the most among us be hearers, where is our obedience? we have indeed the blazing lampe of outward profession, but where is the oyle of grace? Alas, some among us grow to be peremptorie and flat Atheists, denying God that made them, and making but a mocke of Jesus Christ: others, not a few, under the name of religion, root their hearts in the world, some in profits, and some in pleasures, and none of these almost regard religion: others professe religion, and yet live in grosse sinnes, as swearing, drunkennesse, uncleannesse,

uncleannesse, &c. making no conscience of grosse impietie in their lives: so that if we looke into the generall state of our people, we shall see that religion is professed, but not obeyed: nay, obedience is counted precisenesse, and so reproached; but we must know that in the end this prophaning of religion will soone turne all Gods blessings temporall and spirituall, into fearefull curses both of body and soule. If ever any thing bring ruine upon us, it will be the contempt of Gods word professed: and therefore let us in the feare of God endevour our selves not onely to know and heare the Word of God, but to turne unto God from all sinne, and especially in regard of this sinne of disobedience to the Word of God.

Danger of hypocrisie.

Lastly, Christ notes the qualitie of this fall to be exceeding great, to shew unto us the great danger of hypocrisie: for there is great difference betweene these three sorts of men: a sinner that makes no profession of religion, an hypocrite that makes a great shew of pietie in profession, and a true beleever, whose life and conversation is answerable to his profession. For a true professour may fall into sinne very fearefully, as *Peter* and *David* did, and yet recover againe. Also he that is a most notorious sinner, as *Manasses* was, may be converted and repent. But when a professour that is an hypocrite in religion is tried, he falls quite from Christ, and makes a apostasie from his profession: and in this regard his fall is called *great*. And therefore seeing professours may thus fearefully fall away; let us in the feare of God, labour in some truth of heart to yeeld obedience to that we heare.

v. 28 *And it came to passe when Iesus had ended these words, the people were astonied at his doctrine.*

29 *For he taught as one having authoritie, and not as the Scribes.*

These two verses containes the issue and event of this Sermon of our Saviour Christ in his hearers. And in them wee may observe two points: First, the good fruit that came of this Sermon, verse 28. Secondly, the cause and reason thereof, verse 29. The fruit was the astonishing of the people: which S. *Matthew* sets out by three circumstances: I. Of the time, when it appeared, to wit, after the Sermon was ended: II. Of the persons in whom it was wrought, *the people*, that is, the multitude: III. Of the matter whereat they were astonished, namely, at the *doctrine of Christ*.

The Majestie of Christs ministerie.

Touching this astonishing of the people, in it many things are to bee observed. I. That though the person of our Saviour Christ were lowly and base, yet his doctrine in preaching was of great force in the minds of his hearers, for it did amaze and astonish them. This caused the officers that were sent to take him to returne without him, alleaging the majestie of his doctrine for the reason of their fact, *Never man spake as this man did*, John 7.46. and when the governours came with a band of men to apprehend him, so soone as he did but tell them *he was the Christ*, they went backward, and fell to the ground, John 18.6.

This sheweth unto us, that the voice and sentence of Christ given at the last day of Judgement, will be most fearefull and terrible. For if his words were thus powerfull in his base estate of humilitie, what force will they then have, when he shall come in glory and majestie in the clouds, accompanied with thousands of Angels, when as his sight shall be so terrible, that men shall call to the mountaines to fall upon them, and to the rockes to grind them in peeces, if it were possible? well, let the consideration hereof move us to be obedient to his voice in the ministerie of his Word; otherwise, will we nill we, we shall one day be subject to that fearefull voice of condemnation, *Goe ye cursed into everlasting fire.*

Astonishment the word noteth signe of conversion.

II. Doctrine. This astonishment of the people argues some feare and reverence in them towards Christ, which is some commendation unto them: and yet it proves not the truth and soundnesse of their faith and conversion, (though no doubt many that heard him were hereby converted:) for a man may be amazed at Christs doctrine, and yet not be converted thereby: Luke 4.22. the people of Capernaum did marvellously affect the doctrine of our Saviour Christ, *admiring it*, and yet they beleeved not in him, but tooke exceptions against him, *because he was sonne to Ioseph the Carpenter. Pharaoh, Saul*, and *Ahab*, when they were reproved by *Moses, Samuel*, and *Eliah*, they were oftentimes much amazed and confounded in themselves: and yet they did never truly turne from their sinnes: And in this place, I take it, this astonishment of the people is recorded, rather for the commendation of Christs ministerie, than to note out the faith and conversion of the people.

This we are to observe for speciall cause: for it is the ordinarie manner of the most of our hearers, to marke more or lesse what is spoken, to approve the doctrine, and to speake well of the minister, which bee good things in their kinde: but yet this is not enough: we must further labour to receive the word by faith, to repent of our sinnes, and to conforme our hearts and lives unto the word: Luke 11.27. when a *woman* through admiration at Christs doctrine, *pronounced her blessed that bare him, and the paps that gave him sucke*; Christ tooke occasion thence to give unto her and the rest of the hearers this lesson: *nay, rather blessed are they that heare the word of God and do it.* Acts 2.37.

at the first Sermon of *Peter* after the giving of the holy Ghost, the people were greatly amazed at his doctrine, and *being pricked in conscience, cried, men and brethren, what shall we doe?* now *Peter* suffers them not to stand still in this astonishment, but labours further to bring them to true faith and repentance, and to have the same by baptisme confirmed unto them, saying, *Amend your lives, and be baptized*, ver. 38. And so dealt *Paul* with the Jaylor that would have killed himselfe upon the sudden sight of the prison doore being open; for after he was truly humbled he brought him to beleeve.

It may be here demanded, why our Saviour Christ at this Sermon did no more to the most of his hearers, but caused them to wonder, when as the Apostles converted many thousands at some one Sermon: and after brought the whole body of the Gentiles to the faith. *Ans.* No doubt he was able to have converted them all, and we may perswade our selves here were many converted, though it be not recorded, and though indeed the most were onely astonished. But this came so to passe that his promise made to his Disciples might be verified, John 14.12. which was, *that they should doe greater workes than Christ did*; whereof this questionlesse was one, to convert moe in their ministerie than Christ did. And the causes hereof were two: I. That our Saviour Christ might shew himselfe willing to undergoe that base estate of a servant wherein he was borne and continued till his exaltation; therefore he was content to restraine the power of his God-head even from his ministerie, untill he were exalted into glory: II. That he might make it manifest in his Apostles times, that being ascended he did not onely sit at the right hand of his father, that is, rule as a King over all in his princely office; but also that he did indeed governe his Church by his Word and Spirit: and this reason Christ addeth, John 14.12. to prove that his disciples should doe greater workes than he did, *because he went unto his Father*, there to rule and governe his Church.

It may yet further be asked, why Christ did not convert them all, seeing he was able being true and very God. *Ans.* No doubt (as hath beene said) many were here converted, yet not all, because Christ was now *the minister of circumcision*, (as the Apostle speaketh) that is, though in regard of his person he were the Prophet of the whole Catholike Church, yet at this time in this action he was preacher onely to the Church of the Jewes: in which regard he performed this dutie as man onely, and so could doe no more but deliver his Fathers will unto them, and shew himselfe willing to convert them. And in this manner he speakes unto Jerusalem, Matth. 22.37. *O Ierusalem, Ierusalem, ... how often would I have gathered thy children, as a Hen gatheredh her chickens: I would, but ye would not*: that is, as the minister of circumcision in mine owne person, and as God in the ministerie of my Prophets. Thus much of the astonishment it selfe. Now follow the circumstances whereby it is amplified and set out, and they are three:

Matth. 7. vers. 28.

Silence in the holy assemblies of the Church.

The first circumstance is the *time* when they were astonished, namely, *when the Sermon was ended*. No doubt they were amazed in the time of his delivery: but yet they were silent all that while, and shewed no signes of their affection till the Sermon was ended. And this good order ought to be observed of all Gods people in the publike ministerie of the word. In the building of the materiall Temple, there was no noise or knocking heard, so much as of an hammer: whereby was signified that in the assemblies of the Saints, where Gods spirituall temple is building, there should be the like heavenly order observed; men should heare with quietnesse and silence, and shew their affections afterward.

Secondly, we are here taught to labour not onely to be affected in the act of hearing while the doctrine is delivered, but to treasure it up in our hearts, that we may afterward be affected with it, as this multitude was.

Christ preached plainly.

The second circumstance here noted, is the *persons* who were thus astonied: to wit, the *people* or the *multitude*: for after the Sermon was ended they gathered themselves into companies, and made knowne one to another the affections of their hearts toward Christs doctrine. Hence we may gather, that our Saviour Christ delivered his doctrine plainely, unto the conscience of the meanest, and to the capacitie of the simplest; else they could not thereby have beene brought to wonder. And this is a president for all Ministers to follow in the dispensation of the word: so did *Paul*, 2 Corinth. 4.2, 3. in such plainenesse deliver the Word of God, that *if it were hid*, he saith, *it was hid to them which perish*.

Carnall preaching.

The third circumstance is the *object* of their astonishment; that is, his *Doctrine*: *They were astonied at his doctrine*. This teacheth us, that the word of God must be so delivered, that the Doctrine it selfe may affect the hearers. It is a carnall thing for a man so to preach, as the consideration of his wit, of his memorie, of his eloquence, of his great reading, may affect the hearers: many worthy parts (no doubt) were in our Saviour Christ, for which he might well be admired; and yet in the dispensation of his word, he labours by his doctrine onely to affect his hearers: and so must all they doe that will be followers of Christ.

The authoritie of Christs ministerie.

II. Point. Thus much for the fruit of Christs Sermon: Now follows the cause thereof, which is *Christs authoritie* in teaching, vers. 29. *For he taught as one having authority, not as the Scribes.* This authoritie in Christs ministerie was caused from three things: I. From the matter of his Sermon. II. From the manner of his delivery. III. From the things that accompanied his teaching.

Causes of it.

I. The matter.

I. The matter of his Sermon was the incomparable

Matth. 7. vers. 29.

parable excellencie of heavenly doctrine; thus much his enemies the Scribes that came to tempt him, did confesse, Marke 12.14. *Master, thou art true, and teachest the way of God truely.* And this was long before confirmed by *Moses*, who delivered the promise of Christ unto the people, *unto whose mouth God would put his word*, Deut. 18.18. and John 7.16. Christ confesseth, that *his doctrine was not his owne, but his Fathers that sent him.*

II. The manner of his teaching.

II. The manner of his teaching was heavenly: and this shewed it selfe in sundrie things: For, I. Christ taught in his owne name as a Lord of his doctrine, and not as a messenger or interpreter thereof, as the Prophets were. II. His speech and delivery was with speciall grace: Luke 4.22. *The people wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth*, wherein he expressed his humilitie, his meekenesse, love, mercie, and compassion, plainely shewing by his speech that he was induced with all gifts of the Spirit above measure: in this regard it is said, Isay 50.4. *God gave him* (that is, Christ) *the tongue of the learned, to be able to speake a word in due season, for the comfort and appeasing of a distressed conscience*; which no man but Christ is able to doe. III. As he delivered the word vocally unto the outward eare, so he was able by the power of his God-head, to make his hearers to give attendance, and to receive and beleeve that which he taught. And lastly, his zeale for his Fathers glory, and his earnest desire to bring the soules of men unto salvation, which were principall ends of his ministerie, did also adde grace and authoritie thereto.

III. Things accompanying his ministerie.

III. The things that went with his doctrine did also cause authoritie in his ministerie; and these were two: I. *Miracles*; as curing the sicke, and casting out devils; which did greatly confirme his doctrine unto his hearers: Marke 7.37. when he had cured one that was both deafe and dumbe, *the people were beyond measure astonished.* II. An *unblameable life*; for he was *Iesus Christ the righteous*, who performed all things that the law required, fulfilling the will of God in suffering, and suffering in his obedience.

Ministers must maintaine the credit of their ministerie.

Further, note the phrase, in the original it is said here, *He was teaching*; that is, it was his usuall manner and custome, thus to preach with authoritie. Herein Christ is a notable president unto us for sundrie duties.

First, hereby every minister of Gods word is taught to maintaine the credit of his ministerie, and to preserve the same from contempt; especially in his own place, and in his owne person: though Christ were here in a meane and base estate, yet he would not suffer his calling to be contemned, but gets grace thereunto. And *Paul* charged *Timothe, to see that no man despise his youth*, 1 Tim. 4.12. and to *Titus* he gives the like commandement, Titus 2.15. *These things speake, exhort, and rebuke with all authoritie. See that no man despise thee.* Now in the example of Christ, we shall see how this is done, not by outward pompe and estate, or by earthly meanes; but by truth and soundnesse of doctrine, by zeale for Gods glory, and for the good of mens soules, and by an unblameable life.

Rightmanner of preaching.

Secondly, hence all Gods ministers (if they will be followers of Christ) must, learne not onely to teach sound and heavenly doctrine, but to observe therein a divine and spirituall manner of teaching: 1 Corinth. 2. ver. 4. and 12. *Paul* saith, *his preaching was not in humane wisdome*, but in *the plaine evidence of the spirit; comparing spirituall things with spirituall things*: which is then done, when the people may acknowledge the grace of God in the teacher. And it is said of the ignorant man, who is rebuked of the Prophets, 1 Corin. 14.25. *He falls downe on his face, and saith plainely, God is in you indeed.* There is great difference to be made betweene discoursing in Philosophie, which may be done by humane wit, and preaching in divinitie. He that can discourse well in Philosophie, cannot thereupon presently preach and dispense the word of God aright; for preaching is a spirituall dutie, which cannot be performed by naturall gifts onely. The Prophet *Isay* must have his *tongue touched with a cole from Gods Altar, before he could speake and utter Gods Word unto the people*: and *Paul* the most famous of the Apostles, desireth in all his Epistles, *to be prayed for, that his mouth might be opened*: whereby he doth signifie, that to deliver wholesome doctrine in spirituall manner, for the glorie of God, and the good of his people, is a great matter, and cannot by naturall gifts be attained unto. And indeed this is that teaching which saves the soule, and affects the heart of him that belongs to God: which is the thing that every minister of Gods Word ought to labour for.

Isay 6.6.7.

We must maintaine the dignitie of our profession.

Thirdly, seeing Christ in his preaching doth maintaine the authoritie of his ministerie, every man in his place is taught to maintaine and preserve the dignitie of his profession. We are all of us by our profession Christians, and by baptisme the sonnes and daughters of God; now our dutie is to walke worthy this our calling, and to take heed we bring it not into contempt. It is a most heinous wickednesse for any man to bring a slander upon the name and religion of God; and yet nothing is more frequent in this our age: for men will needs be Christians in profession, and therefore will receive the sacraments, which be the highest ordinances of all profession: and yet in their lives they are profane, and live as they list; yea, and if others will not joyne with them in their wickednesse, they will not spare to scorne and revile them. But herein they sinne fearefully, in dishonouring their profession: and thereby they charge others with hypocrisie, that cannot carry so much truth to be answerable to their profession, yet they themselves practise most gross hypocrisie, when as they will beare the name of Christians in professi-

on, and communicate with the Lord his holy ordinances, and yet make no conscience of sinne, but scorne those that doe. Ephes. 4.1. *Paul* prayed for the Ephesians, that they might *walke worthy the vocation whereto they were called*: and Titus 2.7. he exhorts *Titus* hereunto, *that in all things hee should shew himselfe an ensample of good workes, with uncorrupt doctrine, with gravitie, and integritie, &c.* Yea verse 10. hee requires servants *to shew such faithfulnesse in their service, that they may adorne the doctrine of God.*

And not as the Scribes.] For first, they failed in the matter; they delivered not the doctrine of God, but the traditions of men about washings and tythings. Secondly, they failed in the manner; they taught coldly, and without zeale. Thirdly, they failed in the end; they taught in pride and ambition, seeking themselves, and not Gods glory. But Christ, as we have seene, taught farre otherwise; and although he misliked their preaching, both for matter, manner and end, yet he vouchsafed to heare them, or else how could he have reproved these things in them? Which shewes that Christ would not separate himselfe from their assemblies, whose doctrine he disliked, with the deliverie thereof. And therefore no man ought to sever himselfe from the Church of England, for some wants that be therein: We have the true doctrine of Christ preached amongus by Gods blessing, and though there be corruptions in manners among us, yea, and though they could justly finde fault with our doctrine; yet so long as we hold Christ, no man ought to sever himselfe from our Church. And thus much for this Sermon.

Separation from our Church is unlawfull.

Τῷ Θεῷ δόξα.

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9	6	121.1.a
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FINIS.

A CLOVD OF Faithfull Witnesses: LEADING TO THE Heavenly Canaan.

OR,

A COMMENTARIE UPON THE Eleventh Chapter to the Hebrewes, preached in Cambridge by that godly and judicious Divine, Mr. W. PERKINS.

Long expected and desired; and therefore published at the request of his Executors, by WIL. CRASHAW, and TH. PIERSON, Preachers of Gods Word: who heard him preach it, and wrote it from his mouth.

PHIL. 3. 17.
Looke on them that so walke, as yee have us for an example.

HEB. 13. 8.
Whose faith follow, considering what hath beene the end of their conversation.

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