

*At the Haghe Decemb. 19. 1619. I Preached
upon this Text. Since in my sicknesse at
Abrey-hatche in Essex, 1630, revising my
short notes of that Sermon, I digested
them into these two.*

MAT. 4.18, 19, 20. *AND IESUS WALKING BY THE
SEA OF GALILE SAW TWO BRETHREN, SIMON
CALLED PETER, AND ANDREW HIS BROTHER,
CASTING A NET INTO THE SEA, (FOR THEY
WERE FISHERS,) AND HE SAITH UNTO THEM,
FOLLOW ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS
OF MEN; AND THEY STRAIGHTWAY LEFT
THEIR NETS, AND FOLLOWED HIM.*

SOLOMON presenting our Saviour Christ, in the name and person of Wisdome, in the booke of Proverbs, puts, by instinct of the Holy Ghost, these words into his mouth, *Deliciæ meæ esse cum filiis hominum, Christs delight is to be with the children of men;* And in satisfaction of that delight, he sayes in the same verse, in the person of Christ, *That he rejoyced to be in the habitable parts of the Earth,* (that is, where he might converse with men) *Ludens in orbe terrarum,* (so the Vulgat reads it) and so our former Translation had it, *I tooke my solace in the compasse of the Earth.* But since Christs adversary Satan does so too, (Satan came from compassing the Earth to and fro, and from walking in it;) since the Scribes and

Pharisees doe more then so, *They compasse Land and Sea, to make one of their own profession*, the mercy of Christ is not lesse active, not lesse industrious then the malice of his adversaries, He preaches in populous Cities, he preaches in the desart wilderness, he preaches in the tempestuous Sea: and as his Power shall collect the severall dusts, and atomes, and Elements of our scattered bodies at the Resurrection, as materialls, members of his Triumphant Church; so he collects the materialls, the living stone, and timber, for his Militant Church, from all places, from Cities, from Desarts, and here in this Text, from the Sea, (*Jesus walking by the Sea, &c.*)

In these words we shall onely pursue a twofold consideration of the persons whom Christ called here to his Apostleship, *Peter and Andrew*; What their present, what their future function was, what they were, what they were to be; They were *fishermen*, they were to be *fishers of men*. But from these two considerations of these persons, arise many Circumstances, in and about their calling; and their preferment for their chearfull following. For first, in the first, we shall survey the place, *The Sea of Galile*; And their education and conversation upon that Sea, by which they were naturally lesse fit for this Church-service. At this Sea he found them *casting their Nets*; of which act of theirs, there is an emphaticall reason expressed in the text, *For they were fishers*, which intimates both these notes, That they did it because they were fishers; It became them, it behoved them, it concerned them to follow their trade; And then they did it as they were fishers, If they had not been fishers they would not have done it, they might not have usurped upon anothers Calling; (*They cast their Nets into the Sea, for they were fishers*) And then, in a nearer consideration of these persons, we finde that they were *two* that were called; Christ provided at first against singularity, He called not one alone; And then they were *two Brethren*, persons likely to agree; He provided at first against schisme; And then, they were two such as were nothing of kinne to him, (whereas the second payre of brethren, whom he called, *Iames and Iohn*, were his kinsmen) He provided at first, against partiality, and that kinde of Simony, which prefers for affection. These men, thus conditioned naturally, thus disposed at this place, and at this time, our blessed Saviour calls; And then we note their readinesse, they obeyed the call, they did all they

were bid, They were bid *follow*, and they *followed*, and *followed presently*; And they did somewhat more then seemes expresly to have been required, for, *They left their Nets, and followed him*. And all these substantiall circumstances invest our first part, these persons in their first estate. For those that belong to the second part, Their preferment upon this obedience, (*Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men*) it would be an impertinent thing, to open them now, because I doe easily foresee, that this day we shall not come to that part.

In our first part, The consideration of these persons then, though in this Text *Peter* be first named, yet we are to note, that this was not the first time of their meeting; when Christ and they met first, which was, when *Iohn Baptist* made that declaration upon Christs walking by him, *Behold the Lamb of God*, *Peter* was not the first that applied himselfe to Christ, nor that was invited by Christs presenting himselfe to him, to doe it; *Peter* was not there; *Peter* was not the second; for, *Andrew*, and another, who were then *Iohn Baptists* Disciples, and saw Christ declared by him, were presently affected with a desire to follow Christ, and to converse with him, and to that purpose presse him with that question, *Magister, ubi habitas?* They professe that they had chosen him for their Master, and they desire to know where he dwelt, that they might waite upon him, and receive their instructions from him. And in *Andrews* thus early applying himselfe to Christ, we are also to note, both the fecundity of true Religion; for, as soone as he had found Christ, he sought his brother *Peter*, *Et duxit ad Iesum*, he made his brother as happy as himselfe, he led him to Jesus; (And that other Disciple, which came to Christ as soone as *Andrew* did, yet because he is not noted to have brought any others but himselfe, is not named in the Gospel) And we are to observe also, the unsearchable wisdom of God in his proceedings, that he would have *Peter*, whom he had purposed to be his principall Apostle, to be led to him by another, of inferior dignity, in his determination. And therefore *Conversus converte*, Thinke not thy selfe well enough preached unto, except thou finde a desire, that thy life and conversation may preach to others, And *Edoctus disce*, thinke not that thou knowest any thing, except thou desire to learne more; neither grudge to learne of him, whom thou thinkest lesse learned then thy

selfe; The blessing is in Gods Calling, and Ordinance, not in the good parts of the man; *Andrew* drew *Peter*, The lesser in Gods purpose for the building of the Church, brought in the greater. Therefore doth the Church celebrate the memory of S. *Andrew*, first of any Saint in the yeare; and after they have been altogether united in that one festivall of *All-Saints*, S. *Andrew* is the first that hath a particular day. He was *Primogenitus Testamenti novi*, The first Christian, the first begotten of the new Testament; for, *Iohn Baptist*, who may seeme to have the birthright before him, had his conception in the old Testament, in the wombe of those prophecies of *Malachy*, and of *Esay*, of his comming, and of his office, and so cannot be so intirely referred to the new Testament, as S. *Andrew* is. Because therefore, our adversaries of the Romane heresie distill, and racke every passage of Scripture, that may drop any thing for the advantage of S. *Peter*, and the allmightines of his Successor, I refuse not the occasion offered from this text, compared with that other, *Ioh. 1.* to say, That if that first comming to Christ were but (as they use to say) *Ad notitiam & familiaritatem*, and this in our Text, *Ad Apostolatum*, That they that came there, came but to an acquaintance, and conversation with Christ, but here, in this text, to the Apostleship, yet, to that conversation, (which was no small happinesse) *Andrew* came clearly before *Peter*, and to this Apostleship here, *Peter* did not come before *Andrew*; they came together.

These two then our Saviour found, *as he walked by the Sea of Galile*. No solitude, no tempest, no bleaknesse, no inconvenience averts Christ, and his Spirit, from his sweet, and gracious, and comfortable visitations. But yet, this that is called here, *The Sea of Galile*, was not properly a Sea; but according to the phrase of the Hebrews, who call all great meetings of waters, by that one name, A Sea, this, which was indeed a lake of fresh water, is called a Sea. From the roote of Mount Libanus, spring two Rivers, Jor, and Dan; and those two, meeting together, joyning their waters, joyne their names too, and make that famous river Jordan; a name so composed, as perchance our River is, Thamesis, of Thame, and Isis. And this River Jordan falling into this flat, makes this Lake, of sixteene miles long, and some sixe in breadth. Which Lake being famous for fish, though of ordinary kinds, yet of an extraordinary taste and relish, and then

of extraordinary kinds too, not found in other waters, and famous, because divers famous Cities did engirt it, and become as a garland to it, *Capernaum*, and *Chorazim*, and *Bethsaida*, and *Tiberias*, and *Magdalo*, (all celebrated in the Scriptures) was yet much more famous for the often recourse, which our Saviour (who was of that Countrey) made to it; For this was the Sea, where he amazed *Peter*, with that great draught of fishes, that brought him to say, *Exi à me Domine, Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinfull man*; This was the Sea, where himselfe *walked upon the waters*; And where he *rebuked the tempest*; And where he manifested his Almighty power many times. And by this Lake, this Sea, dwelt *Andrew* and *Peter*, and using the commodity of the place, lived upon fishing in this Lake; and in that act our Saviour found them, and called them to his service. Why them? Why *fishers*?

First, Christ having a greater, a fairer Jerusalem to build then *Davids* was, a greater Kingdome to establish then *Juda's* was, a greater Temple to build then *Solomons* was, having a greater work to raise, yet he begun upon a lesse ground; Hee is come from his twelve Tribes, that afforded armies in swarmes, to twelve persons, twelve Apostles; from his *Iuda* and *Levi*, the foundations of State and Church, to an *Andrew* and a *Peter* fisher-men, sea-men; and these men accustomed to that various, and tempestuous Element, to the Sea, lesse capable of Offices of civility, and sociableness, then other men, yet must be employed in religious offices, to gather all Nations to one houshold of the faithfull, and to constitute a Communion of Saints; They were Sea-men, fisher-men, unlearned, and indocil; Why did Christ take them? Not that thereby there was any scandall given, or just occasion of that calumny of *Iulian* the Apostat, That Christ found it easie to seduce, and draw to his Sect, such poore ignorant men as they were; for Christ did receive persons eminent in learning, (*Saul* was so) and of authority in the State, (*Nicodemus* was so) and of wealth, and ability, (*Zacheus* was so, and so was *Ioseph* of Arimathea) But first he chose such men, that when the world had considered their beginning, their insufficiency then, and how improper they were for such an employment, and yet seene that great work so farre, and so fast advanced, by so weake instruments, they might ascribe all power to him, and ever after, come

to him cheerfully upon any invitation, how weake men soever he should send to them, because hee had done so much by so weak instruments before: To make his work in all ages after prosper the better, he proceeded thus at first. And then, hee chose such men for another reason too; To shew that how insufficient soever he received them, yet he received them into such a Schoole, such an University, as should deliver them back into his Church, made fit by him, for the service thereof. Christ needed not mans sufficiency, he took insufficient men; Christ excuses no mans insufficiency, he made them sufficient.

His purpose then was, that the worke should be ascribed to the Workman, not to the Instrument; To himselfe, not to them; *Nec quæsiuit per Oratorem piscatorem*, He sent not out Orators, Rhetoricians, strong or faire-spoken men to work upon these fisher-men, *Sed de piscatore lucratus est Imperatorem*, By these fisher-men, hee hath reduced all those Kings, and Emperours, and States which have embraced the Christian Religion, these thousand and six hundred yeares. When *Samuel* was sent with that generall Commission, to anoint a sonne of *Ishai King*, without any more particular instructions, when hee came, and *Eliab* was presented unto him, *Surely*, sayes *Samuel*, (noting the goodlinesse of his personage) *this is the Lords Anointed*. But the Lord said unto *Samuel*, *Looke not on his countenance, nor the height of his stature, for I have refused him; for*, (as it followeth there, from Gods mouth) *God seeth not as man seeth; Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord beholdeth the heart*. And so *David*, in apparance lesse likely, was chosen. But, if the Lords arme be not shortned, let no man impute weaknesse to the Instrument. For so, when *David* himselfe was appointed by God, to pursue the Amalekites, the Amalekites that had burnt Ziklag, and done such spoile upon Gods people, as that the people began to speak of stoning *David*, from whom they looked for defence, when *David* had no kind of intelligence, no ground to settle a conjecture upon, which way he must pursue the Amalekites, and yet pursue them he must, in the way he findes a poore young fellow, a famished, sicke young man, derelicted of his Master, and left for dead in the march, and by the meanes and conduct of this wretch, *David* recovers the enemy, recovers the spoile, recovers his honour, and the love of his people.

If the Lords arme bee not shortned, let no man impute weaknesse

to his Instrument. But yet God will alwayes have so much weaknesse appeare in the Instrument, as that their strength shall not be thought to be their owne. When *Peter* and *Iohn* preached in the streets, *The people marvelled*, (sayes the Text) why? *for they had understood that they were unlearned*. But *beholding also the man that was healed standing by, they had nothing to say*, sayes that story. The insufficiency of the Instrument makes a man wonder naturally; but the accomplishing of some great worke brings them to a necessary acknowledgement of a greater power, working in that weake Instrument. For, if those Apostles that preached, had beene as learned men, as *Simon Magus*, as they did in him, (*This man is the great power of God*, not that he had, but that he was the power of God) the people would have rested in the admiration of those persons, and proceeded no farther. It was their working of supernaturall things, that convinced the world. For all *Pauls* learning, (though hee were very learned) never brought any of the Conjurers to burne his bookes, or to renounce his Art; But when God wrought extraordinary works by him, That sicknesses were cured by his napkins, and his handkerchiefs, (in which cures, *Pauls* learning had no more concurrence, no more cooperation, then the ignorance of any of the fisher-men Apostles) And when the world saw that those Exorcists, which went about to doe Miracles in the Name of Jesus, because *Paul* did so, could not doe it, because that Jesus had not promised to worke in them, as in *Paul*, Then the Conjurers came, and burnt their bookes, in the sight of all the world, to the value of fifty thousand pieces of silver. It was not learning, (that may have been got, though they that heare them, know it not; and it were not hard to assigne many examples of men that have stolne a great measure of learning, and yet lived open and conversable lives, and never beene observed, (except by them, that knew their Lucubrations, and night-watchings) to have spent many houres in study) but it was the calling of the world to an apprehension of a greater power, by seeing great things done by weake Instruments, that reduced them, that convinced them. *Peter* and *Iohns* preaching did not halfe the good then, as the presenting of one man, which had been recovered by them, did. Twenty of our Sermons edifie not so much, as if the Congregation might see one man converted by us. Any one of you might out-preach us. That one

man that would leave his beloved sinne, that one man that would restore ill-gotten goods, had made a better Sermon then ever I shall, and should gaine more soules by his act, then all our words (as they are ours) can doe.

Such men he took then, as might be no occasion to their hearers, to ascribe the work to their sufficiency; but yet such men too, as should be no examples to insufficient men to adventure upon that great service; but men, though ignorant before, yet docil, and glad to learne. In a rough stone, a cunning Lapidary will easily foresee, what his cutting, and his polishing, and his art will bring that stone to. A cunning Statuary discerns in a Marble-stone under his feet, where there will arise an Eye, and an Eare, and a Hand, and other lineaments to make it a perfect Statue. Much more did our Saviour Christ, who was himselfe the Author of that disposition in them, (for no man hath any such disposition but from God) foresee in these fishermen, an inclinablenesse to become usefull in that great service of his Church. Therefore hee tooke them from their owne ship, but he sent them from his Crosse; Hee tooke them weatherbeaten with North and South winds, and rough-cast with foame, and mud; but he sent them back soupled, and smoothed, and levigated, quickned, and inanimated with that Spirit, which he had breathed into them from his owne bowels, his owne eternall bowels, from which the Holy Ghost proceeded; Hee tooke fisher-men, and he sent fishers of men. Hee sent them not out to preach, as soone as he called them to him; He called them *ad Discipulatum*, before hee called them *ad Apostolatum*; He taught them, before they taught others. As *S. Paul* sayes of himselfe, and the rest, *God hath made us able Ministers of the New Testament; Idoneos*, fit Ministers, that is, fit for that service. There is a fitnessse founded in Discretion; a Discretion to make our present service acceptable to our present Auditory; for if it be not acceptable, agreeable to them, it is never profitable.

As God gave his children such Manna as was agreeable to every mans taste, and tasted to every man like that, that that man liked best: so are wee to deliver the bread of life agreeable to every taste, to fit our Doctrine to the apprehension, and capacity, and digestion of the hearers. For as *S. Augustine* sayes, That no man profits by a Sermon that he heares with paine, if he doe not stand easily; so if he doe not

understand easily, or if he doe not assent easily to that that he heares, if he be put to study one sentence, till the Preacher have passed three or foure more, or if the doctrine be new and doubtfull, and suspitious to him, this fitnessse which is grounded in discretion is not shewed. But the generall fitnessse is grounded in learning, S. *Paul* hath joyned them safely together, *Rebuke and exhort with all long suffering, and learning*. Shew thy discretion in seasonable Rebuking; shew thy learning in Exhorting. Let the Congregation see that thou studieth the good of their soules, and they will digest any wholesome increpation, any medicinall reprehension at thy hands, *Dilige & dic quod voles*. We say so first to God, Lord let thy spirit beare witnesse with my spirit, that thou lovest me, and I can endure all thy Prophets, and all the *væ's*, and the woes that they thunder against me and my sin. So also the Congregation sayes to the Minister, *Dilige & dic quod voles*, shew thy love to me, in studying my case, and applying thy knowledge to my conscience, speake so, as God and I may know thou meanest me, but not the Congregation, lest that bring me to a confusion of face, and that to a hardnesse of heart; deale thus with me, love me thus, and say what thou wilt; nothing shall offend me. And this is the Idoneity, the fitnessse which we consider in the Minister, fitnessse in learning, fitnessse in discretion, to use and apply that learning. So Christ fits his.

Such men then Christ takes for the service of his Church; such as bring no confidence in their owne fitnessse, such as embrace the meanes to make them fit in his Schoole, and learne before they teach. And to that purpose he tooke *Andrew* and *Peter*; and he tooke them, when he found them *casting their net into the Sea*. This was a Symbolicall, a Propheticall action of their future life; This fishing was a type, a figure, a prophesie of their other fishing. But here (in this first part) we are bound to the consideration of their reall and direct action, and exercise of their present calling; *They cast their Net, for they were Fishers*, sayes the Text. In which, *for*, (as wee told you at first) there is a double reason involved.

First, in this *For* is intimated, how acceptable to God that labour is, that is taken in a calling. They did not forbear to cast their nets because it was a tempestuous Sea; we must make account to meet stormes in our profession, yea and tentations too. A man must not

leave his calling, because it is hard for him to be an honest man in that calling; but he must labour to overcome those difficulties, and as much as he can, vindicate and redeeme that calling from those aspersions and calumnies, which ill men have cast upon a good calling. They did not forbear because it was a tempestuous Sea, nor because they had cast their nets often and caught nothing, nor because it was uncertaine how the Market would goe when they had catched. A man must not be an ill Prophet upon his own labours, nor bewitch them with a suspition that they will not prosper. It is the slothfull man that sayes, *A Lion in the way, A Lion in the street*. Cast thou thy net into the Sea, and God shall drive fish into thy net; undertake a lawfull Calling, and clogge not thy calling with murmuring, nor with an ill conscience, and God shall give thee increase, and worship in it, *They cast their nets into the Sea, for they were fishers*; it was their Calling, and they were bound to labour in that.

And then this *For* hath another aspect, lookes another way too, and implies another Instruction, *They cast their nets into the Sea, for they were fishers*, that is, if they had not beene fishers, they would not have done it; Intrusion into other mens callings is an unjust usurpation; and, if it take away their profit, it is a theft. If it be but a censuring of them in their calling, yet it is a calumny, because it is not in the right way, if it be extrajudiciall. To lay an aspersion upon any man (who is not under our charge) though that which we say of him be true, yet it is a calumny, and a degree of libelling, if it be not done judiciarily, and where it may receive redresse and remedy. And yet how forward are men that are not fishers in that Sea, to censure State Councils, and Judiciary proceedings? Every man is an *Absolom*, to say to every man, *Your cause is good, but the King hath appointed none to heare it*; Money brings them in, favour brings them in, it is not the King; or, if it must be said to be the King, yet it is the affection of the King and not his judgement, the King misled, not rightly informed, say our seditious *Absoloms*, and, *Oh that I were made Iudge in the land, that every man might come unto me, and I would doe him justice*, is the charme that *Absolom* hath taught every man. They cast their nets into a deeper Sea then this, and where they are much lesse fishers, into the secret Councils of God. It is well provided by your Lawes, that Divines and Ecclesiasticall persons may

not take farmes, nor buy nor sell, for returne, in Markets. I would it were as well provided, that buyers and sellers, and farmers might not be Divines, nor censure them. I speake not of censuring our lives; please your selves with that, till God bee pleased to mend us by that, (though that way of whispering calumny be not the right way to that amendment) But I speak of censuring our Doctrines, and of appointing our doctrines; when men are weary of hearing any other thing, then Election and Reprobation, and whom, and when, and how, and why God hath chosen, or cast away. We have liberty enough by your Law, to hold enough for the maintenance of our bodies, and states; you have liberty enough by our Law, to know enough for the salvation of your soules; If you will search farther into Gods eternall Decrees, and unrevealed Councils, you should not cast your nets into that Sea, for you are not fishers there. *Andrew and Peter cast their nets, for they were fishers*, (therefore they were bound to do it) And againe, *for they were fishers*, (if they had not been so, they would not have done so.)

These persons then thus disposed, unfit of themselves, made fit by him, and found by him at their labour, labour in a lawfull Calling, and in their owne Calling, our Saviour Christ calls to him; And he called them by couples, by paires; two together. So he called his Creatures into the world at the first Creation, by paires. So he called them into the Arke, for the reparation of the world, by paires, two and two. God loves not singularity; The very name of Church implies company; It is *Concio, Congregatio, Cætus*; It is a Congregation, a Meeting, an assembly; It is not any one man; neither can the Church be preserved in one man. And therefore it hath beene dangerously said, (though they confesse it to have beene said by many of their greatest Divines in the Roman Church) that during the time that our blessed Saviour lay dead in the grave, there was no faith left upon the earth, but onely in the Virgin *Mary*; for then there was no Church. God hath manifested his will in two Testaments; and though he have abridged and contracted the doctrine of both in a narrow roome, yet he hath digested it into two Commandements, *Love God, love thy neighbour*. There is but one Church; that is true, but one; but that one Church cannot be in any one man; There is but one Baptisme; that is also true, but one; But no man can Baptize

himselfe; there must be *Sacerdos & competens*, (as our old Canons speake) a person to receive, and a Priest to give Baptisme. There is but one faith in the remission of sins; that is true too, but one; But no man can absolve himselfe; There must be a Priest and a penitent. God cald no man so, but that he cald him to the knowledge, that he hath called more then him to that Church, or else it is an illusory, and imaginary calling, and a dreame.

Take heed therefore of being seduced to that Church that is in one man; *In scrinio pectoris*, where all infallibility, and assured resolution is in the breast of one man; who (as their owne Authors say) is not bound to aske the counsell of others before, nor to follow their counsell after. And since the Church cannot be in one, in an unity, take heed of bringing it too neare that unity, to a paucity, to a few, to a separation, to a Conventicle. The Church loves the name of Catholique; and it is a glorious, and an harmonious name; Love thou those things wherein she is Catholique, and wherein she is harmonious, that is, *Quod ubique, quod semper*, Those universall, and fundamentall doctrines, which in all Christian ages, and in all Christian Churches, have beene agreed by all to be necessary to salvation; and then thou art a true Catholique. Otherwise, that is, without relation to this Catholique and universall doctrine, to call a particular Church Catholique, (that she should be Catholique, that is, universall in dominion, but not in doctrine) is such a solecisme, as to speak of a white blacknesse, or a great littlenesse; A particular Church to be universall, implies such a contradiction.

Christ loves not singularity; he called not one alone; He loves not schisme neither between them whom he cald; and therefore he cald persons likely to agree, two brethren, (*He saw two brethren, Peter and Andrew, &c.*) So he began to build the Synagogues, to establish that first government, in *Moses* and *Aaron*, brethren; So he begins to build the Church, in *Peter* and *Andrew*, brethren. The principall fraternity and brotherhood that God respects, is spirituall; Brethren in the profession of the same true Religion. But *Peter* and *Andrew* whom he called here to the true Religion, and so gave them that second fraternity and brotherhood, which is spirituall, were naturall brethren before; And that God loves; that a naturall, a secular, a civill fraternity, and a spirituall fraternity should be joyned together;

when those that professe the same Religion, should desire to contract their alliances, in marrying their Children, and to have their other dealings in the world (as much as they can) with men that professe the same true Religion that they do. That so (not meddling nor disputing the proceedings of States, who, in some cases, go by other rules then private men do) we doe not make it an equall, an indifferent thing, whether we marry our selves, or our children, or make our bargaines, or our conversation, with persons of a different Religion, when as our Adversaries amongst us will not goe to a Lawyer, nor call a Physitian, no, nor scarce a Taylor, or other Tradesman of another Religion then their owne, if they can possibly avoid it. God saw a better likelihood of avoyding Schisme and dissention, when those whom hee called to a new spirituall brotherhood in one Religion, were naturall brothers too, and tied in civill bands, as well as spirituall.

And as Christ began, so he proceeded; for the persons whom he called were Catechisticall, instructive persons; persons, from whose very persons we receive instruction. The next whom he called, (which is in the next verse) were two too; and brethren too; *Iohn* and *Iames*; but yet his owne kinsmen in the flesh. But, as he chose two together to avoid singularity, and two brethren to avoid Schisme, so he preferred two strangers before his own kindred, to avoid partiality, and respect of persons. Certainly every man is bound to do good to those that are neare him by nature; The obligation of doing good to others lies (for the most part) thus; *Let us do good to all men, but especially unto them which are of the houshold of the faithfull*; (They of our owne Religion are of the *Quorum*) Now, when all are so, (of the houshold of the faithfull, of our owne Religion) the obligation looks home, and lies thus, *He that provideth not for his own, denieth the faith, and is worse then an Infidel*. Christ would therefore leave no example, nor justification of that perverse distemper, to leave his kindred out, nor of their disposition, who had rather buy new friends at any rate, then relieve or cherish the old. But yet when Christ knew how far his stock would reach, that no liberality, howsoever placed, could exhaust that, but that he was able to provide for all, he would leave no example nor justification of that perverse distemper, to heape up preferments upon our owne kindred, without any consideration

how Gods glory might be more advanced by doing good to others too; But finding in these men a fit disposition to be good labourers in his harvest, and to agree in the service of the Church, as they did in the band of nature, he calls *Peter* and *Andrew*, otherwise strangers, before he called his Cosins, *James* and *Iohn*.

These Circumstances we proposed to be considered in these persons before, and at their being called. The first, after their calling, is their chearfull readinesse in obeying, *Continuò sequuti*, They were bid *follow*, and *forthwith they followed*. Which present obedience of theirs is exalted in this, that this was freshly upon the imprisonment of *Iohn Baptist*, whose Disciple *Andrew* had been; And it might easily have deterred, and averted a man in his case, to consider, that it was well for him that he was got out of *Iohn Baptists* schoole, and company, before that storme, the displeasure of the state fell upon him; and that it behoved him to be wary to apply himselfe to any such new Master, as might draw him into as much trouble; which Christs service was very like to doe. But the contemplation of future persecutions, that may fall, the example of persecutions past, that have falne, the apprehension of imminent persecutions, that are now falling, the sense of present persecutions, that are now upon us, retard not those, upon whom the love of Christ Jesus works effectually; They followed for all that. And they followed, when there was no more perswasion used to them, no more words said to them, but *Sequere me, Follow me*.

And therefore how easie soever *Iulian* the Apostate might make it, for Christ to work upon so weake men, as these were, yet to worke upon any men by so weake means, onely by one *Sequere me, Follow me*, and no more, cannot be thought easie. The way of Rhetorique in working upon weake men, is first to trouble the understanding, to displace, and to discompose, and disorder the judgement, to smother and bury in it, or to empty it of former apprehensions and opinions, and to shake that beliefe, with which it had possessed it self before, and then when it is thus melted, to powre it into new molds, when it is thus mollified, to stamp and imprint new formes, new images, new opinions in it. But here in our case, there was none of this fire, none of this practise, none of this battery of eloquence, none of this verball violence, onely a bare *Sequere me, Follow me*, and *they followed*. No

eloquence enclined them, no terrors declined them: No dangers withdrew them, no preferment drew them; they knew Christ, and his kindred, and his means; they loved him, himselfe, and not any thing they expected from him. *Minùs te amat, qui aliquid tuum amat, quod non propter te amat*, That man loves thee but a little, that begins his love at that which thou hast, and not at thy selfe. It is a weake love that is divided between Christ and the world; especially, if God come after the world, as many times he does, even in them, who thinke they love him well; that first they love the riches of this world, and then they love God that gave them. But that is a false Method in this art of love; The true is, radically to love God for himselfe, and other things for his sake, so far, as he may receive glory in our having, and using them.

This *Peter* and *Andrew* declared abundantly; they did as much as they were bid; they were bid *follow*, and *they followed*; but it seemes they did more, they were not bid *leave their nets*, and yet *they left their nets, and followed him*: But, for this, they did not; no man can doe more in the service of God, then is enjoyned him, commanded him. There is no supererogation, no making of God beholden to us, no bringing of God into our debt. Every man is commanded *to love God with all his heart, and all his power*, and a heart above a whole heart, and a power above a whole power, is a strange extension. That therefore which was declared explicitly, plainly, directly by Christ, to the young man in the Gospel, *Vade, & vende, & sequere, Goe and sell all, and follow me*, was implicately implied to these men in our text, *Leave your nets, and follow me*. And, though to doe so, (to leave all) be not alwayes a precept, a commandment to all men, yet it was a precept, a commandment to both these, at that time; to the young man in the Gospel, (for he was as expressly bid to sell away all, as he was to follow Christ) and to these men in the text, because they could not performe that that was directly commanded, except they performed that which was implied too; except they left their nets, they could not follow Christ. When God commands us to follow him, he gives us light, how, and in which way he will be followed; And then when we understand which is his way, that way is as much a commandment, as the very end it selfe, and not to follow him that way, is as much a transgression, as not to follow him at all.

If that young man in the Gospel, who was bid sell all, and give to the poore, and then follow, had followed, but kept his interest in his land; If he had devested himselfe of the land, but let it fall, or conveyed it to the next heire, or other kinsmen; If he had employed it to pious uses, but not so, as Christ commanded, to the poore, still he had been in a transgression: The way when it is declared, is as much a command, as the end.

But then, in this command, which was implicately, and by necessary consequence laid upon *Peter* and *Andrew*, to leave their nets, (because without doing so, they could not forthwith follow Christ) there is no example of forsaking a calling, upon pretence of following Christ; no example here, of devesting ones selfe of all means of defending us from those manifold necessities, which this life lays upon us, upon pretence of following Christ; It is not an absolute leaving of all worldly cares, but a leaving them out of the first consideration; *Primùm querite regnum Dei*, so, as our first businesse be to seeke the kingdome of God. For, after this leaving of his nets, for this time, *Peter* continued owner of his house, and Christ came to that house of his, and found his mother in law sicke in that house, and recovered her there. Upon a like commandment, upon such a *Sequere, Follow me*, *Matthew* followed Christ too; but after that following, Christ went with *Matthew* to his house, and sate at meat with him at home. And for this very exercise of fishing, though at that time when Christ said, Follow me, they left their nets, yet they returned to that trade, sometimes, upon occasions, in all likelihood, in Christs life; and after Christs death, clearly they did returne to it; for Christ, after his Resurrection, found them fishing.

They did not therefore abandon and leave all care, and all government of their own estate, and dispose themselves to live after upon the sweat of others; but transported with a holy alacrity, in this present and chearfull following of Christ, in respect of that then, they neglected their nets, and all things else. *Perfecta obedientia est sua imperfecta relinquere*, Not to be too diligent towards the world, is the diligence that God requires. *S. Augustine* does not say, *sua relinquere*, but *sua imperfecta relinquere*, That God requires we should leave the world, but that we should leave it to second considerations; That thou do not forbear, nor defer thy conversion to God, and thy

restitution to man, till thou have purchased such a state, bought such an office, married, and provided such and such children, but *imperfecta relinquere*, to leave these worldly things unperfected, till thy repentance have restored thee to God, and established thy reconciliation in him, and then the world lyes open to thy honest endeavours. Others take up all with their net, and *they sacrifice to their nets, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous*. They are confident in their own learning, their own wisdom, their own practise, and (which is a strange Idolatry) they sacrifice to themselves, they attribute all to their own industry. These men in our text were far from that; they left their nets.

But still consider, that they did but leave their nets, they did not burne them. And consider too, that they left but nets; those things, which might entangle them, and retard them in their following of Christ. And such nets, (some such things as might hinder them in the service of God) even these men, so well disposed to follow Christ, had about them. And therefore let no man say, *Imitari vellem, sed quod relinquam, non habeo*, I would gladly doe as the Apostles did, leave all to follow Christ, but I have nothing to leave; alas, all things have left me, and I have nothing to leave. Even that murmuring at poverty, is a net; leave that. Leave thy superfluous desire of having the riches of this world; though thou mayest flatter thy selfe, that thou desirest to have onely that thou mightest leave it, that thou mightest employ it charitably, yet it might prove a net, and stick too close about thee to part with it. *Multa relinquitis, si desiderii renuntiatis*, You leave your nets, if you leave your over-earnest greedinesse of catching; for, when you doe so, you doe not onely fish with a net, (that is, lay hold upon all you can compasse) but, (which is strange) you fish for a net, even that which you get proves a net to you, and hinders you in the following of Christ, and you are lesse disposed to follow him, when you have got your ends, then before. He that hath least, hath enough to waigh him down from heaven, by an inordinate love of that little which he hath, or in an inordinate and murmuring desire of more. And he that hath most, hath not too much to give for heaven; *Tantum valet regnum Dei, quantum tu vales*, Heaven is alwayes so much worth, as thou art worth. A poore man may have heaven for a penny, that hath no greater store; and, God lookes, that

he to whom he hath given thousands, should lay out thousands upon the purchase of heaven. The market changes, as the plenty of money changes; Heaven costs a rich man more then a poore, because he hath more to give. But in this, rich and poore are both equall, that both must leave themselves without nets, that is, without those things, which, in their own Consciences they know, retard the following of Christ. Whatsoever hinders my present following, that I cannot follow to day, whatsoever may hinder my constant following, that I cannot follow to morrow, and all my life, is a net, and I am bound to leave that.

And these are the pieces that constitute our first part, the circumstances that invest these persons, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, in their former condition, before, and when Christ called them.