

Preached at Lincolns Inne
[January 30, 1619/20]

JOHN 8.15. *I JUDGE NO MAN.*

THE RIVERS of Paradise did not all run one way, and yet they flow'd from one head; the sentences of the Scripture flow all from one head, from the holy Ghost, and yet they seem to present divers senses, and to admit divers interpretations; In such an appearance doth this Text differ from that which I handled in the forenoon, and as heretofore I found it a usefull and acceptable labour, to employ our Evening exercises, upon the vindicating of some such places of Scripture, as our adversaries of the Roman Church had detorted in some point of controversie between them and us, and restoring those places to their true sense, (which course I held constantly for one whole year) so I think it a usefull and acceptable labour, now to employ for a time those Evening exercises to reconcile some such places of Scripture, as may at first sight seem to differ from one another; In the morning we saw how Christ judged all; now we are to see how he judges none; *I judge no man.*

To come then to these present words, here we have the same person Christ Jesus, and hath not he the same Office? Is not he Judge? certainly though he retain'd all his other Offices, though he be the Redeemer, and have shed his blood in value satisfactory for all our sins, though he be our Advocate and plead for us in heaven, and present our evidence to that Kingdome, written in his blood, seal'd in his wounds, yet if hee bee not our Judge, wee cannot stand in judgement; shall hee bee our Judge, and is hee not our Judge yet? Long before wee were hee was our Judge at the separation of the Elect and Reprobate, in Gods eternall Decree. Was he our Judge then, and is hee not so still? still he is present in his Church, and cleares us in all

scruples, rectifies us in all errors, erects us in all dejections of spirit, pronounces peace and reconciliation in all apprehensions of his Judgements, by his Word and by his Sacraments, was hee, and is hee, and shall he not be our Judge still? *I am sure my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand the last on earth.* So that Christ Jesus is the same to day, and yesterday, and for ever, before the world begun, and world without end, *Sicut erat in principio*, as he was in the beginning, he is, and shall be ever our Judge.

So that then these words are not *De tempore*, but *De modo*, there was never any time when Christ was not Judge, but there were some manner of Judgements which Christ did never exercise, and Christ had no commission which he did not execute; for hee did all his Fathers will. 1. *In secularibus*, in civill, or criminall businesses, which belong meerly to the Judicatures, and cognisance of this world, *Judicat neminem*, Christ judges no man. 2. *Secundum carnem*, so as they to whom Christ spake this, who judged, as himself says here, according to fleshly affections, *Judicat neminem*, he judges no man: and 3. *Ad internecionem*, so as that upon that Judgement, a man should despair of any reconciliation, any redintegration with God again, and be without hope of pardon, and remission of sins in this world, *Judicat neminem*, he judges no man; 1. Christ usurps upon no mans Jurisdiction, that were against justice. 2. Christ imputes no false things to any man, that were against charity. 3. Christ induces no man to desperation, that were against faith; and against Justice, against charity, against faith, *Judicat neminem*.

First then, Christ judgeth not in secular judgements, and we note his abstinence therein; first, in civill matters, when one of the company said to him, *Master, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me*, as *Saint Augustine* says, the Plaintiffe thought his cause to be just, and hee thought Christ to bee a competent Judge in the cause, and yet Christ declines the judgement, disavows the authority, and he answers, *Homo, quis me constituit Judicem*, Man, who made me a Judge between you? To that Generall, which we had in the morning, *Omne judicium*, the Son hath all judgement, here is an exception of the same Judges own making; for in secular judgements, *Nemo constituit*, he had no commission, and therefore *Judicat neminem*, he judges no man; he forbore in criminall matters too, for when the

woman taken in adultery, was brought before him, he condemned her not; It is true, he absolv'd her not, the evidence was pregnant against her, but he condemned her not, he undertook no office of a Judge, but of a sweet and spirituall Counsellor, *Go, and sinne no more*, for this was his Element, his Tribunall.

When then Christ says of himself, with such a pregnant negative, *Quis me constituit Judicem*, may not we say so too, to his pretended Vicar, the Bishop of *Rome*, *Quis te?* Who made you Judge of Kings, that you should depose them, in criminall causes? Or who made you proprietary of Kingdomes, that you should dispose of them, as of civill inheritances? when to countenance such a pretence, they detort places of Scripture, not onely perversly, but senselessly, blasphemously, ridiculously, (as ridiculously as in their pasquils, when in an undiscreet shamlesnes, to make their power greater then it is, they make their fault greater then it is too, and fil their histories with examples of Kings deposed by Popes, which in truth were not depos'd by them, for in that they are more innocent then they will confesse themselves to be) when some of their Authors say, that the Primitive Church abstain'd from deposing Emperors, onely because she was not strong enough to do it, when some of them say, That all Christian Kingdomes of the earth, may fall into the Church of Rome, by faults in those Princes, when some of them say, that *De facto*, the Pope hath already a good title to every Christian Kingdome, when some of them say, that the world will never be well governed, till the Pope put himself into possession of all, (all which severall propositions are in severall Authors of good credit amongst them) will he not endure Christs own question, *Quis te constituit?* Who made you Judge of all this? If they say Christ did; did he it in his Doctrine? It is hard to pretend that, for such an institution as that must have very cleer, very pregnant words to carry it; did he doe it by his example and practice? Wee see hee abstain'd in civill, he abstain'd in criminall causes. When they come to their last shift, that is, that Christ did exercise Judiciary Authority, when he whipped Merchants out of the Temple, when he curs'd the fig-tree, and damnified the owner thereof, and when he destroyed the Heard of Swine, (for there, say they, the Devill was but the Executioner, Christ was the Judge) to all these, and such as these, it is enough to say, All these were miraculous, and

not ordinary; and though it might seem half a miracle how that Bishop should exercise so much authority as he hath done over the world, yet when we look neerer, and see his means, that he hath done all this by Massacres of millions, by withdrawing Subjects from their Allegiance, by assassinating and murdering of Princes, when we know that miracles are without meanes, and we see the means of his proceedings, the miracle ceases: howsoever that Bishop as Christs Vicar can claim no other power, then was ordinary in Christ, and so exercis'd by Christ, and so *Judicavit neminem*; In secular judgement, Christ judges no man, and therefore that Bishop as his Vicar should not.

Secondly, Christ judges no man by calumny, by imputing, or laying false aspersions upon him, nor truths extrajudicially, for that's a degree of calumny; We enter into a large field, when we go about to speak against calumny, and slander, and detraction, so large a field, as that we may fight out the last drop of our bloud, preach out the last gaspe of our breath, before we overcome it. Those to whom Christ spake here, were such as gave perverse judgments, calumniating censures upon him, and so he judges no man, we need not insist upon that, for it is *manifestè verum*; but that we may see our danger, and our duty, what calumny is, and so how to avoid it actively, and how to beare it passively, I must by your leave stop a little upon it.

When then we would present unto you that monster Slander, and Calumny, though it be hard to bring it within any compasse of a division, yet to take the largenesse of the schoole, and say, that every calumny is either direct, or indirect, that will comprehend all, and then a direct calumny, will have three branches, either to lay a false and unjust imputation, or else to aggravate a just imputation, with unnecessary, but heavy circumstances, or thirdly to reveale a fault which in it selfe was secret and I by no duty bound to discover it, and then the indirect calumny will have three branches too, either to deny expressly some good that is in another, or to smother it in silence, when my testimony were due to him, and might advantage him, or lastly to diminish his good parts, and say they are well, but yet not such as you would esteeme them to be; collect then again, for that's all that we shall be able to doe, that he is a calumniator directly, that imputes a false crime, that aggravates a true crime, that discovers

any crime extrajudicially; That he is an indirect calumniator, that denies another mans sufficiencies, that conceales them, that diminishes them; Take in some of Saint *Bernards* examples of these rules, that it is a calumny to say, *Doleo vehementer*, I am sorry at the heart for such a man because I love him, but I could never draw him from such and such a vice, or to say, *per me nunquam innotuisset*, I would never have spoken of it, yet since all the world talkes of it, the truth must not be disguised, and so take occasion to discover a fault which nobody knew before, and thereby (as the same Father says) *cum gravitate et tarditate aggredi maledictionem*, to cut a mans throat gravely, and soberly, and so much the more perswasively, because he seems, and pretends to do it all against his will; This being the rule, and this the example, who amongst us is free from the passive calumny? Who amongst us hath not some other man calumniated? Nay who is free from the active part? Which of us in some of these degrees hath not calumniated some other? But those to whom Christ makes his exception here, that he judges no man as they judge, were such calumniators, as *David* speaks of, *Sedens adversus fratrem tuum loquebaris*, *Thou sittest and speakest against thy neighbour*, as Saint *Augustin* notes upon that place, *Non transitoriè, non surreptionis passione, sed quasi ad hoc vacans*, not by chance, and unawares, not in passion because he had offended thee, not for company, because thou wouldest be of their minds, but as though thy profession would beare thee out in it, to leave the cause and lay aspersion upon the person, so thou art a calumniator. *They eat up my people as bread*, as *David* says in Gods person: And upon those words of the same Prophet, says the same Father, *De cæteris*, when we eate of any thing else, we taste of this dish, and we tast of that, *non semper hoc olus*, says he, we doe not always eate one sallet, one meate, one kinde of fruit, *sed semper panem*, whatsoever we eate else wee always eate bread: howsoever they imploied their thoughts, or their wits otherways, it was always one exercise of them to caluminate Christ Jesus, and in that kinde of calumny, which is the bitterest of all, they abounded most, which is in scorne and derision. *David*, and *Iob*, who were slander profe, in a good measure, yet every where complaine passionately that they were made a scorne, that the wits made libells, that drunkards sung songs, that fooles, and the children of fooles

derided them; And when *Saul* was in his last, and worst agony, and had abandoned himselfe to a present death, and prayed his armour-bearer to kill him, it was not because the uncircumcised should not kill him, (for he desired death, and he had their deadly arrowes already in his bosome) but it was (as it is expressed there) lest the uncircumcised should come and abuse him, he was afraid of scorne when he had but a few minutes of life. Since then Christ judges no man (as they did) *secundum carnem ejus*, according to the outward appearance, for they thought no better of Christ then he seemed to be, (as some Fathers take that phrase) nor *secundum carnem suam*, according to his owne fleshly passions, (as some others take it) judge not you so neither, first *judge not that ye be not judged*, that is, as Saint *Ambrose* interprets it well enough, *Nolite judicare de judiciis Dei*, when you see Gods judgments fall upon a man, when you see the tower of *Silo* fall upon a man, doe not you judge that that man had sinned more then you, when you see another borne blind, doe not you thinke that he or his Father had sinned, and that you onely are derived from a pure generation; especially *non maledicas surdo*, speake not evill of the deafe that heares not; That is, (as *Gregory* interprets it if not literally, yet appliably, and usefully) calumniate not him who is absent, and cannot defend himselfe, it is the devills office to be *Accusator fratrum*: and though God doe not say in the law, *Non erit*, yet he says, *Non eris criminator*, it is not plainely, there shall be no Informer: (for as we dispute, and for the most part affirme in the Schoole, that though we could, we might destroy no intire species of those creatures, which God made at first, though it be a Tyger, or a viper, because this were to take away one link of Gods chaine out of the world, so such vermine as Informers may not, for some good use that there is of them, be taken away) though it be not *non erit*, there shall be none, yet it is at least by way of good counsaile to thee, *non eris*, thou shalt not be the man, thou shalt not be the Informer, and for resisting those that are, we are bound, not onely not to harme our neighbours house, but to help him, if casually his house fall on fire, wee are bound where wee have authority to stoppe the mouthes of other calumniators; where wee have no authority, yet since as the North wind driveth away raine, an angry countenance driveth away a back-biting tongue, at least deale so with

a libeller, with a calumniator, for he that lookes pleasantly, and hearkens willingly to one libell, makes another, occasions a second; always remember *Dauids* case, when he thought that he had been giving judgment against another he was more severe, more heavy, then the law admitted; The law was, that he that had stoln the sheep should returne fourefold, and *Dauids* anger was kindled says the text, and he said, and he swore, As the Lord liveth, that man shall restore fourfold, *Et filius mortis*, and he shall surely dye: *O judicis superfluentem justitiam*, O superabundant and overflowing Justice, when we judge another in passion; But this is *judicium secundum carnem*, according to which Christ judges no man, for Christ is love, and that *non cogitat malum*, love thinks no evill any way; The charitable man neither meditates evill against another, nor beleeves not easily any evill to be in another, though it be told him.

Lastly, Christ judges no man *Ad internecionem*, he judges no man so in this world, as to give a finall condemnation upon him here; There is no error in any of his Judgments, but there is an appeal from all his Judgments in this world; There is a verdict against every man, every man may find his case recorded, and his sinne condemned in the law, and in the Prophets, there is a verdict, but before Judgment God would have every man sav'd by his book, by the apprehension and application of the gracious promises of the Gospell, to his case, and his conscience. Christ judges no man so, as that he should see no remedy, but to curse God, and die, not so, as that he should say, his sinne is greater then God could forgive, for God sent not his Sonne into the world to condemne the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

Doe not thou then give malicious evidence against thy selfe, doe not weaken the merit, nor lessen the value of the bloud of thy Saviour, as though thy sinne were greater then it: Doth God desire thy bloud now, when he hath abundantly satisfied his justice with the bloud of his Sonne for thee? what hast thou done? hast thou come hypocritically to this place upon collaterall reasons, and not upon the direct service of God? not for love of Information, of Reformation of thy selfe? If that be thy case, yet if a man hear my words, says Christ, and beleeve not, *I judge him not, he hath one that judgeth him*, says Christ, and who is that? *The word that I have spoken*, the same shall

judge him; It shall, but when? It shall judge him, says Christ, *at the last day*, for till the last day, the day of his death, no man is past recovery, no man's salvation is impossible. Hast thou gone farther then this? hast thou admitted scruples of diffidence, and distrust in Gods mercy, and so tasted of the lees of desperation? It is true, *perpetrare flagitium est mors animæ, sed desperare est descensus ad inferos*, In every sinne the soule dies, but in desperation it descends into hell; but yet *portæ inferi non prævalebunt*, even the gates of this hell shall not prevaile against thee; Assist thy selfe, argue thine own case, desperation it selfe may be without infidelity; desperation aswell as hope is rooted in the desire of happinesse; desperation proceeds out of a feare of God and a horror of sinne; desperation may consist with faith thus farre, that a man may have a true and faithfull opinion in the generall, that there is a remission of sinne to be had in the Church, and yet have a corrupt imagination in the particular, that to him in this sinfull state that he is in, this remission of sinnes shall not be applied; so that the resolution of the Schoole is good, *Desperatio potest esse ex solo excessu boni*, desperation may proceed from an excesse of that which is good in it selfe, from an excessive over fearing of Gods Justice, from an excessive over hating thine own sinnes; *Et virtute quis malè utitur?* Can any man make so ill use of so great virtues, as the feare of God and the hate of sinne? Yes they may, so froward a weed is sinne, as that it can spring out of any roote, and therefore if it have done so in thee, and thou thereby have made thy case the harder, yet know stil, that *Objectum spei est arduum, et possibile*, the true object of hope is hard to come by, but yet possible to come by, and therefore as *David* said, *By my God have I leaped over a wall*, so by thy God maist thou breake through a wall, through this wall of obduration, which thou thy selfe hast begunne to build about thy selfe. Feather thy wings againe, which even the flames of hell have touched in these beginnings of desperation, feather them againe with this text *Neminem judicat, Christ judges no man*, so as a desperate man judges himselfe: doe not make thy selfe beleieve, that thou hast sinned against the holy Ghost; for this is the nearest step thou hast made to it, to think that thou hast done it; walke in that large field of the Scriptures of God, and from the first flower at thy entrance, the flower of Paradise, *Semen mulieris*, the generall promise

of the seed of the woman should bruise the Serpents head, to the last word of that Messiah upon the Crosse, *Consummatum est*, that all that was promised for us is now performed, and from the first to the last thou shalt find the savour of life unto life in all those flowers; walke over the same alley againe and consider the first man *Adam* in the beginning who involv'd thee in originall sinne; and the thiefe upon the Crosse who had continued in actuall sinnes all his life, and sealed all with the sinne of reviling Christ himselfe a little before his expiration, and yet he recovered Paradise, and Paradise that day, and see if thou canst make any shift to exclude thy selfe; receive the fragrancy of all these Cordialls, *Vivit Dominus*, as the Lord liveth I would not the death of a sinner, *Quandocunque*, At what time soever a sinner repenteth, and of this text *Neminem judicat*, *Christ judgeth no man* to destruction here, and if thou find after all these Antidotes a suspitious ayre, a suspicious working in that *Impossibile est*, that it is impossible for them, who were once inlightened if they fall away, to renew them againe by repentance, sprinkle upon that worme-wood of *Impossibile est*, that Manna of *Quorum remisieritis, whose sinnes yee remit, are remitted*, and then it will have another tast to thee, and thou wilt see that that impossibility lies upon them onely, who are utterly fallen away into an absolute Apostasie, and infidelity, that make a mocke of Christ, and crucifie him againe, as it is expressed there, who undervalue, and despise the Church of God, and those means which Christ Jesus hath instituted in his Church for renewing such as are fallen. To such it is impossible, because there are no other ordinary meanes possible; but that's not thy case, thy case is onely a doubt that those meanes that are shall not be applied to thee; and even that is a slippery state, to doubt of the mercy of God to thee in particular, this goes so neare making thy sinne greater then Gods mercy, as that it makes thy sinne greater then daily adulteries, daily murthers, daily blasphemies, daily prophanings of the Sabbath could have done, and though thou canst never make that true in this life that thy sinnes are greater then God can forgive, yet this is a way to make them greater, then God will forgive.

Now to collect both our Exercises, and to connexe both Texts, *Christ judgeth all men* and *Christ judgeth no man*, he claimes all judgment, and he disavows all judgement, and they consist well to-

gether. He was at our creation, but that was not his first scene; the Arians who say, *Erat quando non erat*, there was a time when Christ was not, intimating that he had a beginning, and therefore was a creature, yet they will allow that he was created before the generall creation, and so assisted at ours, but he was infinite generations before that, in the bosome of his Father, at our election, and there in him was executed the first judgment of separating those who were his, the elect from the reprobate: And then he knows who are his by that first Judgment, and so comes to his second Judgment, to seale all those in the visible Church with the outward mark of his baptism, and the inward marke of his Spirit, and those whom he calls so, he justifies, and sanctifies, and brings them to his third Judgment, to an established and perpetuall glory. And so all Judgment is his. But then to judge out of humane affections and passions, by detraction and calumny, as they did to whom he spoke at this time, so he judges no man, so he denies judgment: To usurpe upon the jurisdiction of others, or to exercise any other judgment, then was his commission, as his pretended Vicar doth, soe he judges no man, so he disavows all judgment: To judge so as that our condemnation should be irremediable in this life, so he judges no man, so he forswears all judgment. As I live, saith the Lord of hosts, and as I have died, saith the Lord Jesus, so I judge none. Acknowledge his first Judgment, thy election in him, cherish his second Judgment, thy justification by him, breath and pant after his third Judgement, thy Crown of glory for him; intrude not upon the right of other men, which is the first, defame not, calumnie not other men, which is the second, lay not the name of reprobate in this life upon any man, which is the third Judgement, that Christ disavows here, and then thou shalt have well understood, and well practised both these texts, *The Father hath committed all Judgment to the Sonne*, and yet *The Sonne judges no man*.